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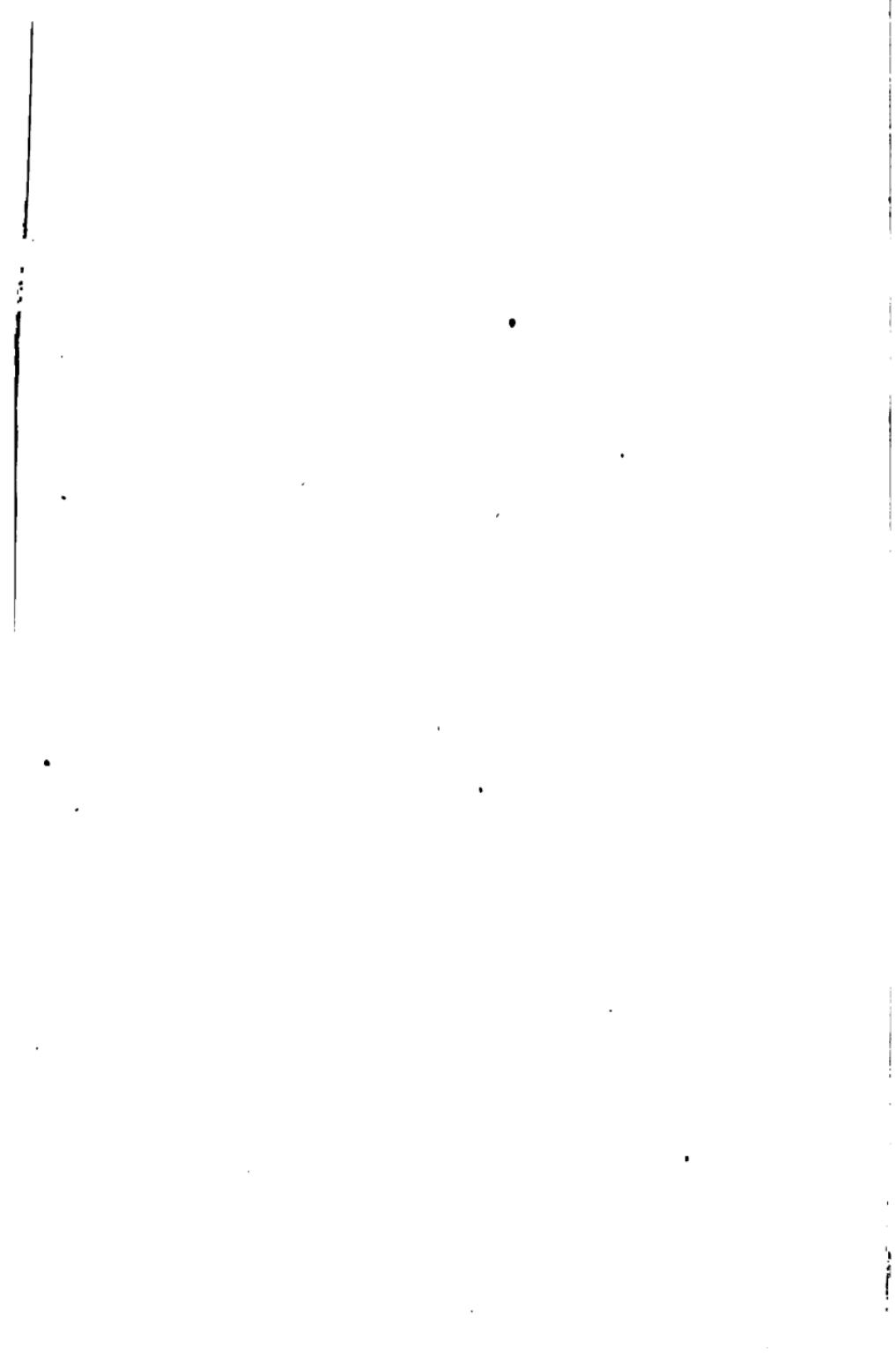
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THE
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST
CONSIDERED IN ITS RELATION TO
THE MILLENNIUM, THE RESURRECTION,
AND THE JUDGMENT.

BY
S. M. MERRILL, D. D.,
BISHOP OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Ίδον, ἐρχεται μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν.

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P R E F A C E.

THE theme of this volume has occupied more or less of the thought of the Church ever since the Savior ascended to heaven, and will receive attention till he returns.

There are many reasons why it should be kept prominently before the people. It is within itself intensely interesting as well as important, and its relation to the doctrines of probation and future judgment and eternal retributions invests it with a grandeur and solemnity of transcendent impressiveness.

I have written, not because I wished to advance any strange theory, nor because of any belief that light had been given me that others do not possess, but because of a conviction that a plain treatment of the subject at this time would be useful, and that such a

grouping of thoughts as is here presented would prove helpful to some who need assistance.

My first intention was carefully to sift the sayings of others, and to support the material positions taken by the opinions of men eminent as exegetes and critics, so as to give the reader a digest of the literature of the subject; but it soon became evident that such a course would swell the volume beyond the limits I determined to observe, and the thought was abandoned and succeeded by a purpose to appeal only to the supreme authority—the Word of God.

My desire was to make the treatise expository, rather than controversial. In this respect I have not altogether succeeded. And yet it is hoped that the controversial spirit has not gained such an ascendancy as to weaken the sense of obligation to deal fairly with opposing opinions.

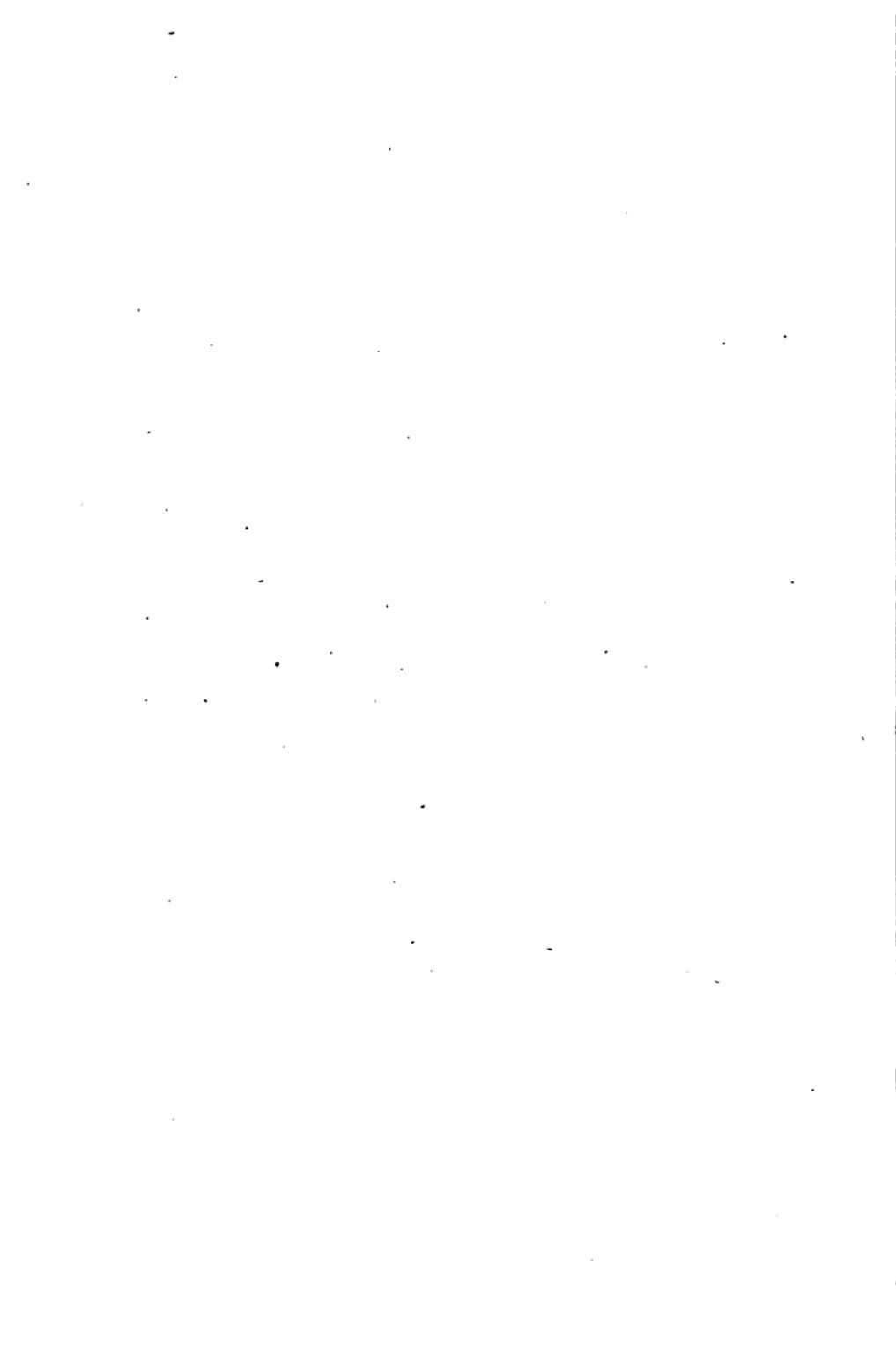
In some instances I have ventured to depart

from the expositions given by able men whose doctrinal positions substantially agree with my own. My reliance in such cases is upon the soundness of the arguments adduced. I have simply followed my own convictions, and endeavored to submit the subject to the the reader just as it lies in my own mind. Self-denial has been required to avoid making a larger book.

Hoping it may be the means of saving some from falling into erratic notions, and of confirming the wavering in the truth, and of stirring up in others a profounder sense of accountability to God in a coming day, I prayerfully send this volume forth upon its mission, bespeaking for it as much of candor in its perusal as has been observed in its preparation.

S. M. M.

CHICAGO, January, 1879.



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THE
SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

THEORIES.

THE Second Coming of Christ is his coming into the sight of men on earth, so that his presence may be known and felt as sensibly as when he lived in Galilee or walked about in Judea. But it does not follow that he must again live on the earth, as a man, subject to the laws of human life, or again take part in the privations and sufferings, or the joys and pleasures, that make up the sum of human experience and of earthly discipline.

His Second Coming is for another purpose than that which once brought him into the sphere of our probational living. Then he came to meet the covenant obligations

assumed in our behalf, with a view to our redemption, and the establishment of his spiritual reign, through which he purposed our elevation to the fellowship of the angels, and the blessedness of eternal life. When he next comes it will be to finish the work begun in his humiliation, and to gather and display the results of his mediatorial reign, in the glorification of his people with himself, and in the vindication of his kingly authority by the punishment of his enemies.

His Second Coming is therefore to be a revelation of his personal glory, and of his oneness with the Father, and his royal prerogatives as King of kings and Lord of lords. In this revelation he will bring with him all the holy angels, and all his saints. His approach will be heralded by signs that can not deceive. Heaven and earth will feel the majesty of his presence, and respond to his call to witness his glory. The living will stand in awe. The dead will awake to life. Time will cease its flow. The great white throne will appear. And all the line of Adam's race will pass the judgment. It is "the day of the Lord."

Such, in brief, is the theme we have in hand. Many theories have been devised for the purpose of explaining the method and purpose of this Second Advent. Those demanding most attention are put forth by pre-Millenarians and Universalists. The first take away much of the glory of the event by assuming that Christ will come to live on earth again—to reign, it is true, as a king, but upon the earth, and to wield an earthly scepter over the nations. The others, in their latest expoundings, reduce it to an indefinable “figurative” coming, which can neither be explained nor comprehended.

The history of pre-Millenarianism is an instructive study, showing how the habit of speculating upon unfulfilled prophecy, with a view to support a theory previously adopted, tends to fanaticism, and ultimately to skepticism. But this line of thought is not to be pursued. Many now advocate the theory who are happily free from the fanatical spirit, and whose devotion to evangelical doctrines is not called in question. There is, however, in their ranks an element by no means inconsiderable, that will require all the wisdom of

the more cultured to restrain, so as to avoid the excesses so natural where religious enthusiasm links itself to a dogma so easily distorted.

The expositors of this theory insist upon the recognition of the Scriptures as the sole authority in matters of faith, and especially with reference to the future. In this we join with them cordially. They also lay down some canons of interpretation which are mainly correct, but need guarding in their application. We agree with them that the literal sense of the Scriptures is to be accepted when it does not lead to absurdities or contradictions, or to doctrines out of harmony with the general current of Biblical truth. By the literal sense is to be understood the natural meaning of the words and sentences grammatically construed. This does not exclude the proper interpretation of figurative language where there is a figure either expressed or implied. The literal sense, if we rightly apprehend the point, is the real meaning of the words—that meaning which the writer or speaker had in his mind, and put into the terms employed. In this sense we favor the literal interpretation of Scripture.

In addition to this, there is a species of warfare being waged against something called the spiritual sense, or the habit of spiritualizing the Scriptures which, while it is not to be condemned at wholesale, is to be carefully restrained from the extremes of its tendency. It is needful to condemn the practice of finding hidden meanings in passages that are plain and easily comprehended, for this has always been a fruitful source of error. It is also proper to hesitate to receive any doctrine that depends on the hidden or spiritual sense of the Scriptures, not found in the words, or supported by the inevitable meaning of the language. Thus far we agree with the literalists in opposition to the spiritual sense. But there are passages that relate to spiritual things. They literally mean spiritualities, and can not be understood if the spiritual meaning be discarded, for they have no other. We insist that in such cases the spiritual meaning shall be sought, and, when found, adhered to as rigidly as the literal sense in other cases. What we want is the *meaning* of the Scripture, be it literal, figurative, or purely spiritual.

The object of this opposition to spiritualizing is to prevent the application of prophetic language that speaks of the reign of the Messiah and the gathering and glory of Israel, to his mediatorial reign in heaven, and to the spiritual prosperity of the Church of Christ. But if such be the real meaning of the prophecies, that meaning is to be accepted, whether reached by a process of spiritualizing or not. And it is not improbable that a further reason for objecting to the spiritual sense of Scriptural terms, is found in the fact that some of the passages which speak of the coming of Christ are taken as indicating a spiritual coming, or manifestation in the heart. But dread of spiritualizing should not frighten us from the truth. For there is a spiritual coming of Christ, which is not only of intense interest to the believer, as he realizes it in spiritual communion with the Savior, but which is indispensable in the application of important facts and declarations in the sacred Word. Christ comes in his kingdom as really as in the clouds of heaven. He dwells in the heart by faith. The riches of the glory of

the mystery preached among the Gentiles is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Thus he manifests himself to his disciples as he does not to the world. The richest legacy the Church possesses is this spiritual presence of the Son of God.

The position of "liberalists"—Universalists always leading the way in Scriptural interpretations—is rather difficult to describe, because of its vagueness and uncertainty. It is mainly negative. Mr. Ballou took ground in opposition to the resurrection of the body, and denied the existence of sin or suffering after death, and found neither room nor use for a future advent of Christ, in his system. He assumed that sin belonged to the physical organism, and that death destroyed its source and being, and freed the soul from all its consequences and liabilities, so that salvation was the immediate and necessary result of separation from the body, which in death was abandoned to total destruction. With him the Second Coming was all figurative, and he located it on the day of Pentecost. But a species of materialism soon gained ascendancy with his followers, so that in a

few years the whole system was essentially changed. The leaders of thought among them assumed that both death and the resurrection affected man in his entire nature. This involved the soul-sleeping idea, and a future resurrection of the whole man. Then a personal advent of Christ was brought in to take place at the end of the Gospel age, to raise the dead, but not to judge the world. At that time the great thought of the system was salvation in the resurrection. Christ was to come and raise all the dead, and clothe them with immortality and holiness and eternal life. That theory took none to heaven till the resurrection, and then it took all together. But this did not last. The Swedenborgian notion concerning the resurrection crept in and supplanted the doctrine of the resurrection of the body at the end of the world. And with this modification the materialistic conception of sin was largely given up. Then came an idea of probation, and of conditional salvation—sounding like evangelical truth, but extending the probation into the future, and making it a law for all worlds and all ages, and insisting that all

will at some time comply with the conditions of life, and enter the kingdom of God. This is the form of Universalism that is now proposing to lead the Christian world into the light! It has no place for a Second Advent, as it denies the resurrection of the body and future judgment. It finds only the "figurative" coming, and places it at the destruction of Jerusalem, where Christ foretold that false Christs would appear, and false teachers would affirm his coming, and said to his followers in regard to all such assertions, "Believe it not."

We thus indicate the positions of the parties to the current discussion concerning the promised return of our Lord, so that the bearing of the argument can at any time be seen. We hold, first of all, to a spiritual coming, which completed the opening of the Gospel dispensation, and the establishment of the kingdom of God; and, also, to a personal coming in glory, at the end of the Gospel dispensation, to raise the dead, to judge the world, punish the wicked, reward the righteous, and to deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST COMING IN HIS KINGDOM.

WHEN John the Baptist began to preach in the wilderness of Judea, he said: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Immediately after his baptism and temptation in the wilderness, "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel." In this way the people were induced to expect that the kingdom of God was about to be established on the earth. Was the expectation thus created well founded? Did the kingdom of God appear?

That the expectation was created, and that the people did look for the coming of the kingdom of God, no one familiar with the Scriptures will deny. But some do deny

that the kingdom has come. They tell us that its establishment on the earth belongs to the period of the Second Coming of Christ, and not to his first coming. This brings us face to face with serious questions. Both the character and design of the Gospel dispensation are involved, as well as the intent and purpose of the Second Advent. If the kingdom of God has not come, how are we to explain the preaching of Christ that produced the expectation of it? How shall we understand the oft-repeated declaration, "The kingdom of God is at hand?" Why were the disciples instructed to say to every house and to every village and city that received them, or that received them not, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you?" It must be that the kingdom of God is come,—that the Gospel we preach is the "Gospel of the kingdom,"—that those who receive Christ, and are "born again," are born of the Spirit into the kingdom of God. We thus believe and teach in all good conscience, and if it be that the kingdom of God is not yet, but is to come when Christ comes again, then must our preaching be "another Gospel."

We have said the people did expect the speedy coming of the kingdom. Let us now see whether this expectation was well founded. Was it the legitimate result of the preaching of Christ and his disciples; or was it a misapprehension of their utterances? There is no doubt that the people formed erroneous notions of the nature of the kingdom, when it was preached as near at hand, and may it not be that they were as far astray in looking for its manifestation within their day? In order to test this question, we must examine those sayings of Christ which limit the time of the coming of the kingdom to the life-time of those then living. These important testimonies are the following: "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." "Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." "But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God." (Matt.

xvi, 28; Mark ix, 1; Luke ix, 27.) These are parallel, and the slight variations in the words assist us in gathering the meaning. The "coming of the Son of man *in his kingdom*," "the coming of the kingdom of God with power," and "seeing the kingdom of God," all refer to the same general occurrence, the setting up of God's kingdom on the earth. This is the coming of the kingdom for which the disciples were taught to pray. It means something that was near at hand.

Let it be observed that no ambiguous term is employed to denote the nearness of the kingdom. The word "generation" is not found here. There is no possibility of stretching the time beyond a very few years. It must occur within the life-time of some that heard him, or the statement must prove false.

And there is yet another passage which limits the time of the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom, or in connection with the manifestation of the kingdom, quite as positively, and perhaps to a shorter time, than those just quoted. It is, "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into

another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." (Matt. x, 23.) This occurs in the instruction given the apostles when sent out under the first commission, which ran thus: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." This was a limited commission. It was preparatory to the coming kingdom. Every point in this ministry looked to that end. That event, whatever it was, was to complete the mission and revelation of the Son of man. He would then be "come in his kingdom." And this mission to the "cities of Israel" would not be fully accomplished "till the Son of man be come." They could "go over the cities of Israel" in a few months. The journey was not great, and the apostles went two and two. But here is the unequivocal assertion, "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Were these words fulfilled, or did they fail? Evidently

the coming of the Son of man, in this verse, is the same as his coming in his kingdom, in the verses above; so that if one failed, they all failed together.

In taking the position that these Scriptures did not fail, but were all fulfilled in the time and manner intended, it becomes necessary that we find the kingdom of God, and the revelation of the Son of man in it, within the life-time of those who heard these words as they fell from the Master's lips. But we must first throw off the embarrassment which some have felt at this point, and guard against a mistake which many have made, and which is the source of no little confusion. It is a turning-point in the argument. The embarrassment arises from confounding things that differ, which is the mistake to be guarded against. The coming of Christ *in his* kingdom, is often confounded with his coming in glory, with the angels, in the clouds of heaven. This is wrong—an error which is the fruitful cause of endless errors and difficulties. The events differ widely in nature, time, object, and result. The one was at hand; the other in the remote

future. The one was known and definitely predicted as to time; and the other was unknown, unrevealed as to time, and kept within the Father's power. The one was to occur within the life-time of those living, and even before the first mission to the "lost sheep" was fulfilled; the other at the "end of the world," after wars and famines and earthquakes and pestilences and after a "tribulation" that was to last many centuries. The one was "in his kingdom;" the other is to be with the angels in the clouds, with the sound of a trumpet. With the coming "in the kingdom" there is no mention of the angels, the clouds, the trumpet, the gathering of the elect, the resurrection, or the judgment. And, on the other hand, the coming "in the clouds" is never limited to the life-time of those who heard the Savior. Let this fact be noted, and this distinction be kept in mind, and much the greater difficulties of the subject will disappear. The coming in the kingdom, which was so near at hand, was much more closely related to the first than to the second advent, and it may not inappropriately be looked upon as the

completion of the coming of Christ in the work of redemption. It is at the beginning, while the coming in the clouds is at the end, of the Gospel dispensation. The one established the kingdom of God on earth, while the other finishes its work, and "delivers it up unto God, even the Father."

Then, we return to the task of finding the kingdom of God on earth, within the lifetime of the then living auditors. When did "the kingdom of God come with power?" When did "the Son of man come in his kingdom?" Let no one imagine that we have in mind the destruction of Jerusalem, or a "figurative" coming of Christ at the time of that calamity. The kingdom of God came with power long before that noted period in Jewish history.

We must here learn the nature of the kingdom, and something of the manner of its coming. When Jesus stood in the presence of Pilate, and was questioned concerning his kingship, he said: "My kingdom is not of this world." This brief sentence sheds a world of light on the point in hand. The disciples, as did the other Jews, still

expected a worldly kingdom, when Messiah should reveal himself, and this answer to Pilate ought to have been sufficient to dispel all such thoughts from those who had confidence in him. As the kingdom of Christ is "not of this world," it is not like worldly kingdoms in its manifestation or work. Then, with this statement in mind, let us turn to another testimony in regard to the coming of the kingdom, in Luke xvii, 20, 21: "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Look again at two sentences here. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation"—or, as the marginal reading is, "not with outward show." Another world of light falls upon our theme! As the kingdom is not of this world, so its "coming" is not with "trumpets" and banners; not with "clouds" and "angels;" not with any outward pomp or grandeur, or any thing to attract the world, or to command its attention.

It must, therefore, come quietly, silently, unobserved by the multitude in their heated strife for worldly things. And mark again: "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you!" Here we have it. This kingdom, which is not of the world, whose coming is silent, gentle, unostentatious, and unseen by the busy throng, is a spiritual kingdom. Its domain is the human soul. It rules in the heart; it is the rule of heaven on earth. The Apostle Paul, in after years, under divine inspiration, declared its nature. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." (Rom. xiv, 17.) Every element of the kingdom of God is in the Holy Ghost. Where the Holy Ghost abides, there is the kingdom of God. All who are born of the Spirit are born into the kingdom. Here another flood of light cheers our search for the kingdom of God!

The Holy Spirit was in the world before the coming of Christ, in some of his offices, and to an extent necessary to the dispensations preceding the Gospel; and so was the kingdom of God in its incipient stages. But

while Christ was yet on earth, it was said, "For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." As a new manifestation of the Spirit was to follow the ascension of the Son of man, so a new display of the kingdom of God was to take place; it was to "come with power." This gift of the Holy Ghost, in its fullness of energy and love, was the promise of the Father. So, after the apostles had ceased to preach under the limited commission, which kept them from the Gentiles and the Samaritans; after they had preached the kingdom of God at hand to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; and after Christ had been crucified and had risen from the dead, and they had received the new commission which sent them into "all the world," to "preach the Gospel to every creature," they were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high. This was to be their final qualification for the new ministry committed to them, and to meet all their needs, and fill all their desires with reference to the coming kingdom. When they were all together, before the ascension, they asked the

risen Savior, saying, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And he said to them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Here we gain insight with reference to the thoughts of the apostles and their expectations. They still looked for the kingdom, and their anxious expectation was met by the promise of the Holy Ghost. For this they waited; and when it was come upon them, on the day of Pentecost, they began to preach, not a coming kingdom, but the kingdom in the heart. The events of that memorable Pentecost ended all looking for an outward kingdom. Then and there the kingdom of God came with power; then the Son of man came in his kingdom.

A careful study of the promises of Christ respecting the coming and offices of the Comforter will show that he was to reveal both the Father and the Son, so that his presence

was to be the presence of Christ for all spiritual ends and work. We give an example from John xiv, 15-23: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world can not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." It is

unquestionable that in the promises, "I will come to you," "I will manifest myself to him," "And we will come unto him and make our abode with him," there is a spiritual presence contemplated, which is fulfilled in the gift and abiding of the Holy Ghost. This was Christ's own spiritual coming, the coming in the kingdom of God, without observation.

Some have objected to this spiritual coming as insufficient to meet all the promises of the Savior to return. We do not propose it as sufficient for that purpose. It by no means answers to the coming in the glory of the Father with the angels. But it meets all the conditions of the speedy coming of the kingdom of God. It is a coming, a revealing, a manifestation of Christ, not to be despised or overlooked. It is not the second coming, but the complement of the first. It took place at the beginning of the Gospel—at the precise juncture indicated beforehand, between the preaching under the limited commission and that under the unlimited. And our pre-millennial brethren misapprehend the subject when they speak of those who recognize this

spiritual coming "as seeking to avoid the doctrine of the personal coming of our Lord." It stands not in the way of the "personal coming," but it takes away from the Pre-millennialists their cherished notion, which is the foundation of their specialty, that the kingdom of God has not yet come, and will not come till Christ comes in person.

Nor does this doctrine of the coming of the kingdom of God and of the spiritual presence of the Son of man in his kingdom conflict with any thing said in the Scriptures of the appearance of the kingdom when Christ comes in glory to raise the dead and judge the world. In this instance the kingdom comes to abide on earth; it comes to gather subjects, to extend its dominion, to take possession of penitent souls; and therefore its coming is a matter of personal experience, prayed for by all Christians, unseen by the world, and unrecognized except by faith. But, at the end of this dispensation of the kingdom, when its subjects are all gathered, and its conquests won—when all rule, and all authority and power shall have been put down, it must be manifested in its com-

pleteneess and glory, when the Lord Messiah shall come in person, in the clouds of heaven, with all his angels and saints, and, as King of kings, shall sit upon the throne of his glory and render unto men according to their deeds. He will "judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and kingdom."

CHAPTER III.

THE PERSONAL COMING.

IT is not unusual with Pre-millennialists to assume in their arguments that any advocacy of a personal and visible coming of Christ is an advocacy of their particular view of his bodily appearing to reign upon the earth. This, however, is unwarranted by the facts. Post-millennialists and Anti-millennialists look forward to the Second Advent as a literal and visible fact, with equal positiveness, and quite as much consistency, as do those who expect Jesus of Nazareth yet to become king in Jerusalem, sitting upon a literal throne. The difference is with reference to the time and object of the advent—the one class holding that it is to set up the kingdom on earth, and the others believing it is to close up the affairs of the spiritual kingdom, to raise the dead, and judge the world in righteousness.

The personal coming is denied by "Liberalists," who deny the future judgment. These turn the glowing descriptions of Christ's second coming into rhetorical embellishments of things occurring among the nations, and reject the idea of any visible appearance of Christ, either before or after the period known as the "thousand years" of Satan's bondage. It is therefore necessary that we look directly at the question of a personal coming of the Lord.

This is purely a question of Revelation. The Scriptures are our only authority. The language in which the fact in question is set forth must be interpreted according to its proper import, the same as when any other subject is presented. We must not assume in advance that some "figurative" or strange meaning must be sought for the terms employed. If any of the words are technical, their signification must be found in use by comparing Scripture with Scripture, not in the usage adopted by specialists in theology, who have forced upon the terms meanings in harmony with their favorite theories.

The first passage we cite, as distinctly con-

veying the idea of a personal coming, is Acts i, 9-11: "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This is as explicit an assertion of a personal coming as words could well make. Jesus ascended in the presence of the disciples. He is unmistakably known to them. He went up in person, while they were looking at him, and the cloud inclosed him, and took him out of sight. The two men in white apparel were not mortals—they were angels of God, unless, perchance, they were the two men, Moses and Elias, who appeared with him in the transfiguration, and were overwhelmed with him in the cloud. They were of the escort that went with him to heaven. Their word were intended for the comfort of those addressed, and could not have been more defi-

nite. "This same Jesus." The name identifies the person. "Which is taken up from you into heaven." There is nothing doubtful here. "Shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This determines both the fact and the mode. He shall come as he went. He went up personally, bodily, literally, visibly; he went up in a cloud with the angels. And he shall so come, in like manner. He must, therefore, come personally, bodily, literally, visibly; he must come in a cloud, with the angels.

And thus he declared himself that he would. Unto the high-priest, who "adjured" him, he said: "Nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right-hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." In many places both the angels and the clouds are associated with him, when he comes in his glory.

This ascension in the cloud fulfilled a remarkable prophecy in Daniel: "And I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days,

and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Dan. vii, 13, 14.) This prophecy is often applied to the Second Coming of Christ, but such application is manifestly wrong. The scene is in heaven, and the Son of man was "coming to the Ancient of days," not to this world; and he was coming to him to receive a kingdom. It was the day of his coronation in heaven, and in every respect answers to the period of his ascension in a cloud.

Having thus been raised from the dead, and exalted to the right-hand of God—"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come,"—"he sat down, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." In other words, he must remain in heaven during the period of his mediatorship—that is, till the work of his kingdom

on earth is accomplished. Hence, Peter said of him, in his discourse in Solomon's porch of the temple: "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." This can not mean less than, till every prophecy relating to the kingdom of Christ, and his rule and work on earth, is fulfilled. It holds his bodily presence in heaven till after the chaining of Satan, and the thousand years of his imprisonment, because "the time of the restitution of all things" is necessarily beyond this millennium, to which some of the prophecies relate.

Inasmuch as most of the passages which speak of the personal coming of Christ will receive attention in other chapters, and in connections requiring specific applications, it is needless to enlarge on many of them here. We must, however, glance at the terms employed to give expression to the personal advent.

Look at the word *parousia*. Its definition is, "a coming, an approach, presence." It denotes particularly the coming or presence

of a person. Thus Paul says: "I am glad of the *parousia* [coming] of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus." (1 Cor. xvi, 17.) Again, "That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my *parousia* [coming] to you again." (Phil. i, 26.) Also, "For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily *parousia* [presence] is weak, and his speech contemptible." (2 Cor. x, 10.) Once more, "Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforteth us by the *parousia* [coming] of Titus." (2 Cor. vii, 6.) This word, which so plainly expresses a literal, personal coming or presence, is used in a multitude of instances with reference to the coming of Christ; and in such relations that no "figurative," or even spiritual, manifestation can possibly be meant. Thus, when the angels, the saints, the clouds, and the trumpets accompany him, and when he raises the dead, sits upon the throne, and renders unto men according to their works.

The word *epiphaneia* is likewise used to denote the personal appearing of our Lord in his Second Coming. The lexicographers

define it, "an appearance, show, display, grandeur, splendor." In its classical use, it applies to the invisible divinities that become visible. It also applies to the appearance of the sun after the passing away of clouds. In the New Testament it expresses the visibility of the Son of God, when he comes forth from the Father, so as to be seen of men. In 2 Tim. i, 10, it expresses the "appearing" of Jesus Christ on earth, when he accomplished the work of redemption. It occurs in Titus ii, 13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious *appearing* of the great God, and our Savior Jesus Christ." This epiphany is necessarily personal and visible. Also in the following: "And not to me only, but unto all them also that love his *appearing*." (2 Tim. iv, 8.) And in this: "Who shall judge the quick and the dead at his *appearing* and kingdom." These are cited as examples. The conclusion to which a thorough tracing of the word would lead is apparent.

Another word may be studied. In 2 Thess. i, 7, the word *apokalupsis* expresses the "revelation" of the Lord Jesus, when

he comes with "his mighty angels." It is defined "an uncovering, exposure; a revelation, disclosure, exposition; a display, appearance, manifestation." It may apply to persons or things, and especially to spiritual truths. It is the title of the last book of the New Testament. The first verse of that book, however, shows that Jesus Christ is the subject of the revelation. Paul says, Gal. i, 16: "But when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." The allusion is to the revelation of Christ to him, when on the way to Damascus, he was arrested by the overwhelming light, and heard a voice, saying, "Why persecutest thou me?" And, in answer to the inquiry, "Who art thou, Lord?" he heard the words, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." This same "revelation" is again alluded to in the following: "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." (I Cor. xv, 8.) This word also relates to a personal appearance, in I Peter i, 7: "Might be found unto

praise and honor and glory at the *appearing* of Jesus Christ." It is also rendered "coming," where a personal revelation is meant, in 1 Cor. i, 7: "Waiting for the *coming* of our Lord Jesus Christ."

These are not the only words that convey the idea of a personal coming. The ordinary verbs that express the act of coming are found in almost every form, and in such relations as to express a movement from heaven. "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Phil. iii, 20.) "And to wait for his Son from heaven." (1 Thess. i, 10.) "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven." (1 Thess. iv, 16.) "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels." (2 Thess. i, 7.) "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with the angels." (Matt. xvi, 27.) Thus Christ "comes;" he "descends from heaven;" he comes "with the angels;" he comes "in the clouds." And when he comes, he "sits upon the throne of his glory;" he raises the dead; he judges the

world; he "confesses" men; he "denies" men; he is "ashamed" of men. In every variety of form, personal coming is expressed, and personal actions are attributed to him when he comes. If there be no personal advent in the future the language of the New Testament is not only incomprehensible, but misleading.

Sometimes, while training his disciples to think for themselves, and to apprehend spiritual things, he astonished them with seeming paradoxical statements, and by bringing events remote from each other in themselves into close relations, by the use of similar language in describing them. Thus in one sentence he speaks of his personal coming in the glory of his Father, with the angels, to render unto men according to their works; and in the next instant he speaks of his speedy coming in his kingdom—marking the transition of thought by his familiar "Verily I say unto you." Matt. xvi, 27, 28, is a striking example of this method of mentioning different events in connection, because of resemblance in some particular, either in fact

or in relation. Thus he said many things which the disciples did not and could not understand until the Holy Ghost came upon them, and led them into all truth. But there is nothing affirmed in all or any of his words contrary to his personal coming.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

WHEN our Savior had finished his discourses in the temple, in which he so severely dealt with the hypocrisies and inconsistencies of the Jews, the disciples called his attention to the buildings; and he said to them, "See ye not all these things? verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." This statement so impressed them that they desired to hear more on the subject, and they embraced the first suitable opportunity of seeking further light. "And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matt. xxiv, 2, 3.)

These questions gave occasion for that

elaborate statement concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, the coming of Christ, and "the end of the world," which is consecutively reported by Matthew in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of his Gospel, and which is given less methodically by Mark and Luke.

Perhaps no part of the New Testament has caused so much discussion, or given rise to so many diverse and conflicting opinions, as this prophecy. Many, with much learning, have taken in hand to set forth in order its true meaning, and with no little confidence have proclaimed the mystery solved—only to be followed by others, who point out the mistakes of all preceding expositors, and insist upon still another interpretation. In the presence of such experiences, we desire with becoming modesty to seek the meaning of so much of this discourse as bears upon the topic in hand, and to make such application of the language as will accord with the New Testament teaching in its less intricate portions.

The first thing to be attended to is the scope of these questions. We can not see into the minds of the disciples, as they came privately to the Master, so as to know pre-

cisely the thoughts that gave form to their inquiries; nor is it essential that we should; for it is quite probable that the answers elicited carried their ideas into wider fields, and brought before them events of mightier import than they could possibly have anticipated. And yet it is evident that they expected revelations of a serious character, and perhaps startling and far-reaching in results. By the first question they alluded to the statement previously made that not one stone should be left upon another that should not be thrown down. This pointed to the coming destruction of the city and temple; and, as this question referred to that event, there is no doubt that so much of the discourse as answered it should be interpreted as relating to that calamity. Thus far the ground is solid beneath us, and no room for controversy. All parties agree to this. But the second question introduces additional matter, and lays the foundation for the discussions which have ensued. It is not improbable, from the connection these questions seem to have had in the minds of the disciples, that they had an impression that the downfall of those magnifi-

cent buildings would only take place when Christ should come in his glory, as he had so often told them he would come; and this coming they evidently supposed would be at "the end of the world." But, whatever they thought, whether their conceptions of the future coming of the Son of man were correct or not, matters little to us, since our conclusions must be guided wholly by the answers given. The two questions are distinct, and the last has two items in it which are as closely joined in the answer as in the question. We shall therefore take up the first question, and try to gather the answer to it, leaving the other question and answer for succeeding chapters.

"When shall these things be?" The Savior might have given a direct answer to this, naming the number of years, if that had been best, or had accorded with his purpose; but he did not. He began with an admonition. His first utterance was, "Take heed that no man deceive you." The danger of deception was present to his mind. He saw this in the way they reasoned among themselves and in their tendency to expect the literal kingdom,

with the Messiah enthroned in Jerusalem; and he probably foresaw the time when false interpretations of his words would locate his second coming in connection with the disasters about to be described. At all events, his warning against deceivers related to false assertions of Christ's presence here and there, in the midst of the confusion and disorder so near at hand. "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Following this comes a general description of the world, which, in a limited sense, applies to the condition of things prior to the downfall of the city, but reaches out in its ultimate meaning to coming ages, and shows the bearing of the remark, "But the end is not yet." Evidently he intended to impress the disciples that much time would elapse before the "end" should come. "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. All these things are the beginning of sorrows." The effort that some have made to restrict all this to the petty strifes between the tribes of Israel is futile. When our Sa-

rior said "nations" and "kingdoms" he meant nations and kingdoms; and when he mentioned "wars and rumors of wars" he spoke in the language of men, to be understood in the popular sense. And then all these were not the end, but the "beginning of sorrows." An indefinite train of evils was to come, which no thoughtful person would expect to begin and end in a single life-time. And so in the following, concerning their own experiences: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you; and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." He is still generalizing, or portraying successive events, reaching far down into the coming ages, if not to the end of time. And to this list he adds one more general prediction before coming to his answer to the first question: "And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness

unto all nations ; and then shall the end come." This looks to the full extent of the commission, afterwards given, to "go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." The word here rendered world—*oikoumene*—means the habitable earth ; and the addition of "all nations" cuts off all possibility of restricting the language to a limited portion of the world. Thus far the Master was looking at the sweep of centuries, and seeking to lift the thoughts of his hearers from the narrow range of their previous conceptions.

Then comes his answer to the first question, which begins with the fifteenth verse, and includes the twenty-second : " When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand), then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains : let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house ; neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days ! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter,

neither on the Sabbath day. For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

In Luke's report of this answer, it is said, "When ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains." It is therefore certain that the "abomination of desolation" was connected with the Roman army. But we need not specify details. The point is made that the answer to the first question relates to the downfall of Jerusalem. To this there is scarcely a dissent among expositors of note. But it should be remarked that down to this point not a word is said by the Lord about his coming. With all he says about this terrible state of things, including the war, the desolation of the city, and the unexampled tribulation, to exceed in severity any thing in the history of the past, he gives not the slightest hint of any kind concerning

the coming of the Son of man. In view of the positiveness with which Universalists and others assert that Christ came "figuratively" to bring this great judgment on the Jewish nation, the absence of allusion to himself in this connection is a fact to be remembered.

A "figurative" coming of Christ is no coming at all. Those who believe in such a "coming" at the destruction of Jerusalem impose upon themselves by the sound of words without meaning. If the phrase, a "figurative coming," have any meaning it fails to reach our perception. Certainly those who use it intend to say that Christ himself did not come in person; and if he did not come in person as the Son of man he did not come at all. A figurative advent is a myth. But it is probable that those who speak of the "figurative coming" mean that there is a figure of speech in the language which describes the coming. In other words, the language of Christ, and not his promised coming, is figurative. This is more intelligible, but it reduces the coming in the clouds with the angels—for this is the only coming mentioned in the entire discourse—to a flourish of rhetoric! And

this coming, be it remembered, is not promised in connection with the answer to the first question, the one that related specifically to the calamities about to come upon the Jews.

Then we come face to face with a fact of the utmost importance in this discussion—that there was no coming of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem of any kind, whether literal, "figurative," spiritual, or judicial. None but "false Christs" were to be expected at that time.

Having answered the first question, as we have seen, the Savior returned to the warning against deceivers, with which he prefaced his general remarks on the future of the nations, and emphasized the warning by reiteration. His earnestness shows that this was the point of danger to his followers. "Then"—mark the note of time—"Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not." Christ was not to be expected. To all who affirm that he came at that time, "figuratively," or any other way, this emphatic injunction applies—"Believe it not." False teachers and false Christs were to be numerous, but the living Christ affirmed that that

was not the time to look for him or his coming. "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not." How could he more positively or unequivocally declare that he would not be there? And yet, in the face of these repeated warnings and these plain affirmations that none but false Christs were to come at that time, this time and place, above all others in the world's history, are selected by many—including the best and most learned of men, as the scene of the fulfillment of his most sublime utterances in regard to his coming in the glory of the Father, with the holy angels! Verily, there was occasion for his warnings and for his sorrowful intimation that the "very elect" were liable to be deceived.

Following this warning against expecting him to come in the midst of these scenes of disaster, the Savior gives a reason why all reports of his presence, whether in the desert or

in secret chambers, should be disbelieved, even when supported by "signs and wonders." That reason shows that his coming was not to be of a private or local character; that it was not to depend upon the testimony of witnesses; that, on the contrary, it was to be so public, so manifest, and so glorious that there could be no failure to recognize it, and no possibility of passing it in doubt. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

This was his first direct statement concerning his coming in this discourse; and certainly it ought to discourage all interpreters from looking for a local or "figurative" advent, where he so often assured them it was not to be found. And whether the disciples, who came to him with these questions, associated his "coming and the end of the world" with the destruction of Jerusalem or not, when they propounded the questions, it is quite certain that his answers were calculated to drive out all such impressions, and to show them that the events they were considering were very different in character, and widely

separated in point of time. For he not only told them that his coming would not take place then, but with equal explicitness he said, "the end is not yet." Why, then, must we be told again and again, as we are by learned expositors, that the "end" to which reference was made, did come then? Is not this one of the marvels of criticism? And yet learned disquisitions are written to show that the destruction of Jerusalem was "the end of the world"—the *aion*, or Jewish age! This point is of sufficient importance to occupy a separate chapter, which we devote to its elucidation.

The destruction of Jerusalem was the culmination of a series of revolts on the part of the Jews, and subjugations by the Roman power. Under Nero the war began, and Vespasian was given command of the Roman army, and undertook to subdue the rebellion. But each defeat was followed by a new outbreak. At length Vespasian was called to Rome, where he became emperor, and committed to Titus the duty of putting an end to Jewish revolts. This general entered upon his task with spirit, and, being fully empow-

ered by his master, whose experiences with this people had taught him the formidable character of the undertaking, he summoned to his aid every needed means of success, and carried the war to the environments of the capital of the nation. Here matters reached a crisis. The Roman general is accredited with humane dispositions, and it is thought he was reluctant to assail the stronghold, but was compelled, by duty to his government, and the stubbornness of the Jews, to proceed to a degree of slaughter and destruction that was painful to himself. However this may be, the city was eventually carried, and the misery and ruin attending the contest have rendered the downfall of Jerusalem an event of marked notoriety in the history of bloodshed and devastation. The city and temple were destroyed; many thousands fell in battle, and by the fury of the troops after the capture of the city, and the untold sufferings by famine and pestilence can scarcely be imagined.

This great calamity occurred A. D. 70. Many Jews were then carried off and sold into slavery. But few remained about the

ruins of the city. Some continued to live in Palestine; and, as it was not the policy of the Romans to compel conquered provinces to abandon their national religion, the Jews were permitted to hold their Sanhedrim in Samaria. They therefore retained some of their ecclesiastical forms, and remained a people after the destruction of their capital. Before this war there were large colonies of the Jews in other countries—in Egypt, in Mesopotamia, and in Africa. After the war, these foreign colonies received large accessions from the land of their fathers. Although conquered, scattered, and peeled, their spirits were not broken, and dreams of freedom and national restoration were fondly cherished. They kept up correspondence, and cultivated mutual sympathy, and a patriotic feeling, mingled with religious enthusiasm, that would not long remain quiet under Roman domination—especially in view of the laws enacted forbidding circumcision, and requiring contributions for the support of Pagan temples. And they prospered amazingly in the increase of wealth and population.

In fifty years after the destruction of Jerusalem they were again ripe for revolt. They were on the lookout for the Messiah, and anxiously expecting him to come as a deliverer, and break for them the yoke of bondage, now so oppressive, and so heartily detested. All that was needed to kindle the flame of war, and gather the scattered hosts of Israel, for the recovery of their freedom, was a leader sufficiently skilled and courageous to command their confidence and strike the blow.

About this time arose a leader who was called Bar-cochba—*Son of a Star*. This title was to impress the Jews that he was the one predicted in Balaam's prophecy, that "there shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel." Of his real name or personal history we have no information. Nor do we know certainly that he claimed the title or the honors of the Messiahship. But it is evident that the Jews very largely believed he was their deliverer, and rallied to his standard in great numbers, and with astonishing wealth and means of war.

Taking advantage of the absence of the

Roman forces in a distant part of the empire, the Jews sprang to arms and struck for the recovery of Palestine. They gained the city of Jerusalem—not large, nor populous, nor rich, but sacred, and they took possession of most of the country, and even pushed out beyond the borders of the Holy Land. Another bloody war ensued. Adrian called his chief general from the West, and sent him with all speed to reconquer the Jews. The war was most sanguinary. Hundreds of thousands perished. The sufferings of the Jews exceeded the miseries of the overthrow under Titus. The destruction of the city was now completed, and the plowshare was driven through the site of the temple. The nationality of the Jews was destroyed, and their expulsion from Judea complete. Thus we see that the words of Christ, even as applied to the calamities of the Jewish nation, were verified, when he said, "But the end is not yet."

So far as is known, Christians took no part in the rebellions of the Jews, and it is a striking evidence of Providential protection, that not one of them perished in the fall of Jerusalem. During a lull in the war, or while the

Romans were hesitating about attempting the capture of the city, it is authentically reported that they retired from the city to a place called Pella, where they remained in safety during the "troublous times." Thus they saved themselves by following the direction of the Master, who had told them to "flee to the mountains." It is safe always to obey the word of the Lord in small things as well as in great.

But we are not to assume that his followers were to escape trouble entirely. He did not promise them this. On the contrary, he foretold their calamities, as well as those of the Jews. "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake." Accordingly, they passed the fires of persecution. In some parts of the empire they were classed with the Jews, and subjected to all the disabilities imposed on that people, and were required by law to contribute to the support of pagan worship. This involved their consciences; and their unwillingness to respond to this requirement awakened against them all the malice the Romans held against the Jews,

because of their numerous rebellious and stubborn resistance. But the history of those terrible days is written, and the lessons of the dark record are ours. We find all the words of our Lord and Savior verified, not excepting his declaration that the calamities he described were "the beginning of sorrows." And "the end is not yet." Another chapter will consider the "end of the world," and still another "the tribulation of those days," and the "signs" of that "coming," which was not by any manner of means to be expected in connection with the calamities of the Jewish nation.

CHAPTER V.

THE END OF THE WORLD.

THE Scriptural phrase, "the end of the world," has an important bearing on the subject in hand, and deserves careful consideration.

It is claimed that this phrase, used by our Lord in parable, prophecy, and promise, relates to the close of the Jewish dispensation, and not to the winding up of the affairs of this world when time shall cease. And it is essential that any system of doctrines that denies the coming of Christ to judge the world at the end of the mediatorial reign should maintain this ground; for the coming of Christ at "the end of the world," in some sense, is not to be questioned. It is the occurrence of this phrase in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, in the second question propounded to the Savior, that gives the defend-

ers of a figurative coming the anxiety they manifest.

Their position is that the word "world," in this phrase, is a mistranslation; that the original word—*aion*—should be rendered *age*; and that the application should be made so as to show that it was the "end of the Jewish age" or dispensation the disciples and the Savior were speaking of in the use of this language.

Writers of respectability have given countenance to this exposition, so that authorities of high character for learning and evangelical soundness can be quoted in its support; and yet it is clearly untenable and misleading. We reject it utterly, and give reasons; and if our reasons are solid, so as to overthrow the position against which they are alleged, they sweep away the entire assumption of a "figurative" coming of Christ at the destruction of Jerusalem.

The entire ground of the assertion that this phrase means the end of the Jewish age is the fact that the word rendered "world" sometimes means "age," and may be fairly so translated. This fact is not disputed. No

violence would be done if the phrase were rendered "the end of the *age*." The question is not as to the meaning or force of the word, but as to its application. If the period of the Jewish economy was one "age," the period of the Gospel economy is another "age" or dispensation; and if the Jewish "age" had an "end," the Gospel age will also have an "end." Then, conceding that the word *aion* means *age*, and might be so rendered, the question is, To which "age" does the phrase apply in our Savior's discourses—the Jewish or the Christian? This is a question of fact. If it applies to the Jewish age alone, the advocates of a figurative coming of Christ have one point in their favor, and so far may be right. But if it applies to the "age" of the Gospel, as we shall see that it does, then the notion of a figurative advent must be abandoned. The issue is plain and vital.

More has been conceded to the opposition, with reference to this word *aion*, than a knowledge of all the facts will warrant. It has been claimed, and sometimes admitted, that *aion* never means the "world" in which

we live and as we use the term "world." We know that *kosmos* is the proper word for "world," and expresses the ordinary conception of the material globe, and does it, as *aion* can not; and yet there is a fact which has evidently escaped the attention of those who make the broad assertion that *aion* never means "world." In the Greek Testament *kosmos* and *aion* are used interchangeably in some instances, and in other places *aion* plainly takes the meaning of *kosmos*. An example of the interchangeable use of these words is found in 1 Cor. iii, 18, 19: "If any man among you seemeth to be in *this world* [*aion*], let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of *this world* [*kosmos*] is foolishness with God." An instance of *aion* taking the meaning of *kosmos* is found in Heb. i, 2: "By whom also he made the worlds" [*aionas*]. Another example of this kind is found in Heb. xi, 3: "Through faith we understand that the worlds [*aionas*] were framed by the word of God." The worlds that were "made" and "framed" by the word of God were none other than the material worlds that float in space, including the

world in which we live—the *kosmos*. We call attention to this fact, not for the purpose of building an argument upon it, but as an offset to the confident assertion which is so often made to the contrary. It is a fact not without significance in this discussion, and yet we submit it without further comment.

The application of the phrase in question to the destruction of Jerusalem, or to any thing coincident therewith, is unauthorized and without meaning. Strange that it should have been so widely accepted! It aims, when thus applied, to denote the “end” of the Jewish dispensation. But the Jewish dispensation “ended” long before Jerusalem was destroyed. And to this fact we invite particular attention. Jerusalem was destroyed forty years after the ascension of Christ, and therefore after the ministry of the apostles; and, of course, it was after the “end” of the Jewish, and after the beginning of the Gospel age. The apostle used the phrase correctly, of course, and with undoubted reference to the “end” of the Jewish age, when he said, “But now once in the end of the world [*aion*] hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice

of himself." (Heb. ix, 26.) This shows that Christ's first "appearance" or coming was at the end of the Jewish age, as his second coming will be at the end of the Gospel age. Strictly speaking, the end of the Jewish age was the time that Christ died. It was when he "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." That was a typical dispensation, and could not last an hour longer than the period of the fulfillment of the types. The rending of the veil of the temple marked the time of the closing up of the typical economy. No other period is designated or known in the Scriptures, or in any wise set forth as the "end of the Jewish dispensation." The Christian dispensation began with the death of Christ, and was fully ushered in not later than the day of Pentecost, which, as we have seen, was the date of the beginning of the kingdom of God on earth—the day on which Christ came "in his kingdom," and the "kingdom of God came with power." That day was an epoch. It stands out in history as the birthday of the Church of Christ in its new relation, and as fully endowed for the conquest of the nations. We dare not date the new dispensa-

tion later than that memorable Pentecost. But, if this is correct, the Jewish dispensation was then past. The types were fulfilled. The apostolic ministry belonged not to the Jewish but to the Gospel age, as every intelligent reader of the Scriptures will readily admit. Hence, the Jewish dispensation closed and the Christian dispensation began at least forty years before the destruction of Jerusalem—for the dispensations did not lap. Both were not in progress at the same time. Neither was there a hiatus of forty years between them. When one ended the other began. The apostles entered upon their ministry under the final commission with the dawn of the new dispensation, and lived and labored and died in the full blaze of Gospel light while Jerusalem was yet standing. It is therefore absurd to speak of the destruction of Jerusalem as "the end of the Jewish age."

The phrase in dispute occurs also in the great commission, and its use in that place ought to determine its application in other passages, and particularly where the second coming is connected with it. When Christ

sent his apostles into all the world to baptize and teach the nations, he said to them, "And lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Does this mean that Christ was to be with his ministers only until the end of the Jewish age? So we are told by those who deny the future coming of the Lord to judgment—consistency requires them to do it; but the absurdity of the statement must appear upon its face. The commission was given them to preach the Gospel, and his presence was promised during the time they were thus employed. If the preaching under this commission belongs to the Gospel age, then the promised presence of Christ belongs to the Gospel age, and the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway," covers the entire period of the Gospel dispensation. The Jewish age ended before the apostles began to preach under this commission. Christ himself brought that dispensation to a close when he "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Here we stand with confidence. If the commission to preach the Gospel to every creature belonged to the Jewish age, and was fulfilled under that economy, then our critics

may be right in their assumption that "the end of the world," in this passage, means the "end of the Jewish age." But who will assert all this? Who believes it? Surely no one who intelligently weighs the matter will affirm any thing so preposterous. And yet it must be done, or the very foundation of the opposition to the future coming of the Son of man to judgment gives way. For as certainly as the obligation to preach the Gospel pertains to the Gospel age, and lasts as long as the age lasts, it follows that the spiritual presence of Christ is promised throughout that age, and the "end of the world" means the end of the Gospel age. And if this is the true application of the phrase in this passage, it can scarcely be possible that it will bear a different application where the Second Coming of Christ is connected with "the end of the world."

The same conclusion is forced upon us by the use the Savior made of this phrase in his exposition of the parable of the tares and the wheat. Matt. xiii, 37-43: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the

field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." This is full of instruction. It is not a parable, but the exposition of a parable. The language should therefore be taken in the most literal sense admissible, and particularly with reference to the description given of the divine arrangement for the separation of the tares and wheat—the children of the kingdom, and the children of the wicked one.

It is evident that "the end of the world" here mentioned did not take place at the

time Christ "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." That great fact put an end to the typical economy, and the Jewish age, but no one believes it was the "harvest" described in this Scripture. Our critics do not so apply the language, but invariably to the destruction of Jerusalem. That sad event is all their hope. If it was not the "end of the world," as we have seen it was not, their whole theory fails. The "harvest" was not then, for the righteous did not at that time experience the blessedness of the promise that they should "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." They received no special distinction in connection with the horrors of that catastrophe, except that they escaped the miseries of the Jews by obeying the direction of the Master to "flee to the mountains." Neither were the angels sent forth at that time as the "reapers." The assumption that the "angels" were Gospel ministers is groundless, and contrary to all correct ideas of the Savior's language; and yet if we should admit the baseless assumption, the facts would condemn the interpretation sought

to be forced upon this expression. The Gospel ministers were not sent forth at the destruction of Jerusalem, but long before, so that the apostles had finished their ministry, and had all gone to rest—unless John still lingered—before that time. And they were not sent forth as “reapers,” but as “sowers.” Their business was unlike that which is ascribed to the angels when the harvest comes.

But the point to be noted is, that the harvest is the “end” of that particular “age” in which the “kingdom of heaven” is displayed. Did the parable of the “tares” relate to the condition of things before the birth of Christ? If the “kingdom of heaven” pertained to the Jewish dispensation, and accomplished its work therein, and terminated with the close of that typical period, then there might be propriety in claiming that the “harvest” was the “end of the Jewish age.” And there can be no propriety in that claim without this condition of facts. But it was not the Jewish economy that was illustrated by this parable. The kingdom of heaven did not belong to that age. The

law and the prophets were until John the Baptist, and since then the kingdom of heaven is preached. This kingdom belongs to the age of the Gospel. Its coming was seen in Christ's personal ministry, and its establishment on earth was complete when the kingdom of God came with power on the day of Pentecost. The *First* Coming of Christ put an end to the Jewish age, as his *Second* Coming will bring an end to the Gospel age. Hence, when he comes, he will "send forth his angels"—send them forth "with a great sound of a trumpet"—and "gather out of his kingdom all things that offend"—an expression which, of itself, proves beyond question, that the "harvest" is to be at the end, and not at the beginning of the Gospel age.

Thus, every turn we give to this language, every possible view that has reason in it, carries us to the same conclusion, and reveals more and more clearly the absurdity of the assumption that "the end of the world," as used by our Lord, had reference to the end of the Jewish age. Such a position can not stand for a moment without making

the kingdom of heaven synchronical with that age, and the folly of attempting this is too glaring for even those whose doctrine is unable to stand without it. The "end of the age" meant in this parable is the time of the "harvest;" and the harvest can not come till after the sowing of the good seed; and the good seed are the children of the kingdom, sown by the Son of man. The "tares" grow along with the "wheat," and so long as the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one live together in this world, it is useless to imagine that the "harvest" is past. The harvest separates the tares from the wheat, or it does nothing. "So shall it be in the end of the world."

There can be no doubt that the disciples learned to associate the coming of Christ with the "end of the world," from this parable, and the one which follows,—that concerning the net, which gathered all kinds of fishes, good and bad. The phrase occurs in that parable in precisely the same way and in the same sense as in this of the tares. Both look forward to the Second Coming of Christ with the angels. After hearing these para

bles, and hearing them explained by the Divine Author himself, they naturally felt persuaded that the dispensation of the kingdom of heaven about to be inaugurated would last till the coming of Christ in glory, which he so frequently mentioned. And when his attention was called to the magnificence and seeming permanence of the temple and its surroundings, and he in turn spoke of the same, and said to them that "not one stone should be left upon another that should not be thrown down," they sought the first opportunity to ask an explanation. "And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" That the disciples joined these events together in their own minds, there can be little doubt. They had heard his discourses, which fixed his coming at the end of the dispensation of the kingdom, and they could not do otherwise than connect in their questions those things which he had so often assured them belonged together; namely, the coming of Christ, and the end

of the world. Nor did he disconnect these things in his answer. On the contrary, his answer assumed the correctness of the impression indicated in the questions that his coming was at the "end of the world." And surely, for the reasons already given, he did not mean, nor did the disciples understand him to mean, the end of the Jewish age. They may not have thought much of the different dispensations, at that time, as they probably knew but little, as yet, of the changes just at hand; but they must have known that the age of which he spoke, and which was to end at his coming in the glory of the Father with the holy angels, was the age of the kingdom of heaven on the earth—an age about to begin. But, however imperfect their knowledge of these things, the Savior himself understood the subject, and understood the bearing of the questions propounded to him, and no doubt weighed the words employed in his answer, and anticipated the interpretations of questions and answer in after times. Had he in any way disconnected what the disciples joined together, their imperfect knowledge might be

called into the account to explain their mistake. But he did nothing of the kind. He carefully distinguished between the two questions, but not between the items, in the last question. He connected the Second Coming with the angels, as closely with the "end of the age" in his answer, as the disciples did in their questions, or as he had previously done in his parables. We are therefore shut up to the conclusion that the Second Coming of Christ is to take place at "the end of the world," which is the end of the mediatorial dispensation—the end of time, when the kingdom of God, consummated in its earthly history and relations, shall be "delivered up," that "God may be all in all.

And in confirmation of this, we shall adduce the very language of Christ, in regard to the "tribulation," and "signs of his coming," which has been relied upon to connect all these glorious manifestations of the Redeemer's ultimate triumph, with the saddening scenes of Jerusalem's desolation.

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER THE TRIBULATION.

HAVING seen the import and bearing of the answer the Savior gave the first question submitted to him by the disciples, as he sat on the Mount of Olives, and also the meaning and application of the phrase, "the end of the world," we come now to a study of the answer to the second question, and therefore to a consideration of the "tribulation of those days," and of the "signs" of the second coming.

The question is, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" The answer is embraced in verses 29-31: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then

shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Here are several things which are evidently to follow each other in order, some of which will occupy no little time in their inception, development, and completion. The order may be stated thus: 1. The tribulation; 2. The darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars; 3. The appearing of "the sign of the Son of man;" 4. The coming of the Son of man; and 5. The sending forth of the angels to gather the elect. Whatever these successive occurrences mean, they require much time—may we not say many centuries? The supposed limitation of all these things to a brief space, because of the prediction in the thirty-fourth verse, will be fully explained in another chapter, and be shown to be no limitation at all as to time. But now we turn attention to the first item, which is, "The tribulation of those days."

The first thing that strikes us forcibly in this answer is that every event named is after the "tribulation" is past. The tribulation began with the Roman invasion that laid waste the city and country of the Jews, and destroyed their temple. The popular idea is that Christ came in some way not defined, but called "figurative," for the purpose of bringing these disasters on the Jewish people as judgments or punishments for their unbelief. With all respect for the learning and the critical skill employed in support of this hypothesis, we dissent from it totally. If this hypothesis were correct, we should expect the language to read, "Just before the tribulation of those days;" or, at least, "At the time or in the midst of the tribulation;" but that is not the reading. There is not a word or hint anywhere that Christ was coming to bring judgments on the Jews. This figment of a "figurative" coming for such a purpose is not only without foundation, but is contradicted by every word the Savior uttered in relation to his coming. There is a world of meaning in that little word "after," in this passage. The things to be studied were all

"after the tribulation," and consequently were no part of the tribulation, as they neither preceded nor caused the tribulation, nor even accompanied it. The word "immediately" is not in the way, as we shall soon see; but just now we need to take in the force of the word "after." The evangelist Mark, as well as Matthew, uses this word; and Luke gives the same order of events, without reporting in full.

Then, since it is settled that at this point in his discourse our Lord had passed by the destruction of Jerusalem, and the attending and ensuing "tribulation," without authorizing the expectation of his coming, and proceeds to declare what should come to pass beyond that tribulation, it becomes necessary that we determine what constituted the "tribulation of those days," and how long it was to last.

If we have read correctly the answer to the first question, and the general remarks preceding that answer, it is clear that the tribulation was not to be over in a short time. All the ills of the times—the war, famine, pestilence—the fall of the city; the

destruction of the temple; the bloodshed, the rapine, the desolation of the land, and the dispersion of the people, were only the "beginning of sorrows." The setting up of "the abomination that maketh desolate" was to be no transient evil. But for a particular statement of the "tribulation" we turn to Luke xxi, 24: "And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Now let us look at these particulars:

First. "They shall fall by the edge of the sword." This relates to the destructiveness of the war. It has been estimated that more than a million perished in all during the campaigns under Vespasian and Titus, resulting in the destruction of the city and temple. But this was not the end of this part of the tribulation. Perhaps as many or more were slaughtered in the subsequent rebellions and subjugations, including the final overthrow of the Jewish armies, led by the *Son of a Star*, when Adrian's army completed the desolation begun so long before. This final catastrophe oc-

curred about A. D. 135. We have less knowledge of its details than of the earlier conflicts, as Josephus was dead, and no successor arose to continue the story of the Jewish wars; but in the interpretation of the prediction, "They shall fall by the edge of the sword," these repeated subjugations, and especially this last one, which probably surpassed all the others as a literal fulfillment, ought not to be overlooked.

Secondly. "And shall be led away captive into all nations." The overthrow of the Jews, A. D. 70, in a comparatively small way, fulfilled this part of the prophecy. The Jews were scattered after the destruction of the city, to some extent. Captives taken in arms, and not put to death, were sold into slavery. But this was not the general dispersion. Titus did not carry off the Jews as a nation. He permitted them to live in Judea, and even to settle among the ruins in Jerusalem. He also, as before remarked, allowed them to establish their Sanhedrim in Samaria, where also the patriarch established himself at the head of religious affairs. And the Jews that left the country, and settled in Cyprus, and in

Egypt, and in Mesopotamia, and in Africa, did not go as slaves, but as tradesmen and merchants; so that, as we have seen, in a few years, the nation was turbulent and threatening in its attitude, and giving no little trouble to the Romans. And when their last effort for freedom was made, they were strong enough to seize nearly the whole land, and to cost the Romans an immense sacrifice of life and treasure, and to require the presence of Adrian's greatest general—Julius Severus—to overcome them. But this was finally accomplished, with unprecedented slaughter, and then the nation, as such, was overthrown indeed. After this the remains of the temple, which Titus left, were torn out, and the foundation plowed. Then, also, it was that the name of the place was changed, and called *Colonia Ælia Capitolina*, in honor of the god to whom it was dedicated, as a Roman city, and whose temple was built where the Jewish temple had formerly stood. This completed the prophecy in regard to “the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place.” And then, also, it was that the nation was “led away captive,” for the

masses of the people were sold into slavery, until the slave-market was glutted. Adrian forbade the Jews entering the city, even to weep over the ruins of the sacred places. And now they became objects of hatred to the Romans wherever they were found. They suffered untold hardships in Alexandria and in Cyprus and wherever they took refuge, or were carried into slavery. In every place they became a hissing and by-word. Thus towards the middle of the second century of the Christian era, under the reign of Adrian, this part of the predicted "tribulation" was fulfilled. "They were led away captive into all nations."

Thirdly. "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles." Jerusalem, and the whole of Palestine, have been occupied by Gentiles from the dispersion of the Jews, above mentioned, till the present day. The Romans, Persians, Saracens, and Turks, have alternately exercised jurisdiction, fulfilling to the letter this specification in the prophecy. And there is peculiar force in the words, "shall be trodden down." The occupancy of the country by Gentiles is not the whole

of the disaster. It has been "trodden down." The march of armies over it has been frequent and crushing. The populations inhabiting it have not been thrifty. The ancient fertility of the soil has long since departed. The city of Jerusalem has never approximated its former splendor. Every thing wears an aspect of weariness. Compared with its olden fruitfulness, the whole land is desolate. The prophecy of Daniel, as well as that of Jesus, is accomplished. "And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

Fourthly. "Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This points out the continuance of the "tribulation," indicating its duration. That it was to be a long-continued tribulation, including a series of disasters, has become plain enough; but here, for the first time in the discourse, we find a positive statement touching this point. But this does not imply that the Jews were to be incessantly falling by the sword through all the centuries of their tribulation. This part

was accomplished within about one hundred years after the prophecy was delivered. Nor does it mean that the Jews were to be "slaves" all this time, or kept in a state of "captivity," otherwise than in the dispersed condition in which they remain, although for many years, and in many countries, they were more literally captives than now. Their dispersion among the nations is, however, to this time, a part of the "tribulation." But the desolation of their father-land, and its being "trodden down" by the Gentiles, was to continue, as it does continue, and will, "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Then, and not till then, will "the tribulation of those days" be over.

But what is meant by "the times of the Gentiles being fulfilled?" Some think it means the general conversion of the Gentiles. Others, that the Gentiles are to have the privileges of the Gospel as long as the Jews were the peculiar people. It can not mean less than till all the Gentile nations have the offer of the Gospel. Possibly it alludes to what is said in verse fourteenth with reference to the Gospel being "preached in all

the world for a witness unto all nations." No one supposes the period is yet past. Paul speaks of the same thing, Rom. xi, 25: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." This follows the prediction of the conversion of the Jews, which will occur with the removal of their "blindness," or hardness, as the word implies; and that is to follow the "fullness of the Gentiles." It follows, therefore, that so long as the fullness of the Gentiles is not come in—so long as Gentile nations remain without the Gospel—and so long as this judicial "blindness" is upon the Jews, and Jerusalem is trodden down of the Gentiles, "the tribulation of those days" is not past.

It is objected to this long continuance of the tribulation, that its measurement was to be counted by "days" and not by years and centuries. The objection is futile, since the phrase "those days" need not be taken in the restricted sense supposed by the objector. The meaning depends on the standard of

measurement you have in mind. If you are only speaking of trivial events, beginning and ending in a few hours, the expression, "those days," will be correspondingly limited and definite. But if you are considering great national affairs, involving the rise and fall of dynasties, and stretching out through many centuries, the phrase, "those days," while equally appropriate, will take a very different meaning. Thus it was with our Lord. While sitting there on the side of Mount Olives, with the turrets and domes of the grand old city in full view, and his thoughts busy with the sacred associations of the past, with the scenes just witnessed in the temple and with the coming desolation which had already caused him to weep, and with the future of his own nation all spread out before him, with their captivity and dispersion and their wanderings down through the ages till "the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled," he spoke of what should happen "after the tribulation of those days." His gaze was upon distant scenes. Before his mental vision rolled the teeming populations of the whole earth, with the struggles of mighty nations,

as following the tribulation is the darkening of the sun and moon and the falling of the stars. It is not essential that this language be taken in a strictly literal sense, though it is not improbable that in the final adjustment of the elements for the conflagration which is to follow, phenomena will be seen presenting such appearances as would suggest such expressions for their description.

The first impression with every reader must be that the very grandeur of the scene depicted should carry us away from the local disorders of the Jews—away from the confines of Judea and the violent coming of the Roman army—away from the petty contests between the tribes of men to the preparations for the coming of the grandest day in the history of the world, the day of the coming of the Lord; and the most critical analysis of the language and the connection will confirm this first impression. The fact that it follows the tribulation necessitates the abandonment of the preposterous notion that Christ was only speaking of the portents of his coming to destroy Jerusalem. And let no one be overawed at this point by any array of great

names that may be brought to support the unmeaning "figurative" coming of Christ. The words of the divine Lord are before us, and what he says must guide us, whether it be in the track of popular thinking or in ways that we knew not.

It is true that similar language is found in the Old Testament prophecies, where such phenomena in connection with the heavenly bodies are mentioned, when only national judgments or revolutions are meant in the application. But this does not prove that the Savior referred to the same judgments on the same nations or to similar ones. Some of the revolutions described by the old prophets were past when Christ spoke. His eye was on the future—the distant future—as we are bound to believe. Let us, then, admit that he used highly figurative language, with reference to great changes in distant ages, having in view revolutions among nations which mark an epoch in the world's history, near the "times of the fullness of the Gentiles," and what follows? Why, that Jesus Christ used language, with reference to the affairs of the nations, similar to that employed by

Isaiah, with reference to Babylon, Isaiah xiii, 10; and with reference to Idumea, Isaiah xxxiv, 4; and by Ezekiel with reference to Egypt, Ezek. xxxii, 7; and by Daniel with reference to Jerusalem. But it does not follow that what he said must come within the borders of Judea or within the space of forty years. This, as before said, belittles the whole subject.

It will now be seen that there is no issue in regard to the nature of the language before us, as all agree that it is highly figurative. The only question is as to the application of it. Many see in it nothing broader or grander than premonitions of the disaster at Jerusalem. These overlook the nature of the tribulation and its extent, and misapprehend the word "generation" in the verse below. Others, apparently feeling bound in some way to interpret the entire discourse, in its first meaning, as relating to the downfall of Judaism and the catastrophe to the city—perhaps swayed by the same oversight and misapprehension, have invented a double meaning; and, while they apply it locally in an inferior sense, they concede that the scene portrayed

swells incomparably beyond any thing known in the history of the Jews or in the overwhelming of their armies and city. These, indeed, insist that the language all applies to Jerusalem, but they make the local judgment upon that city a type of the final judgment at the last day. And, of course, this interpretation admits a "figurative" coming of Christ, which it makes typical of a literal coming! It is easy enough to see how literal things or facts can typify spiritual things, but how a "figurative" action, if there be any such thing, can typify a literal event or action, is not so plain to men of ordinary perception.

Let us then suppose that the language in question is figurative—that, when it is said, "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken," the Savior, like the prophets of old, had in view some revolutions which should take place among the nations of the earth—to what period in the world's history shall we look for the accomplishment of these revolutions? Nothing answering to so lofty a description occurred when Jerusalem fell

under Titus; and that could not have been the time, because the "tribulation of those days" was not then past. Nor is the time yet come for the same reason. We insist upon it, that whatever peoples or nations be affected by these predicted convulsions, the time can not be here until after the "tribulation," which brings us down to the period of the "fullness of the Gentiles." We protest not against receiving the words as figurative, but against disturbing the order of events as laid down by our Lord.

In searching for an application of these words of Christ to the condition of the nations very late in the dispensation and near the conversion of the Jews, we are reminded of similar language in the book of Revelation, which demands a similar application. "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind; and the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and

every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains ; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb : for the great day of his wrath is come ; and who shall be able to stand ?" (Rev. vi, 12-17.) The location of this scene proves its relation to the events which mark the close of the dispensation. It is under the opening of the *sixth seal*.

There are three ways of marking the epochs of time during the Gospel age—the opening of seven seals; the pouring out of the seven vials of wrath by seven angels, and the sounding of seven trumpets by seven angels. The whole dispensation is covered by these seven epochs. It is not necessary to suppose that the seals, the vials, and the trumpets correspond all the way through, as under each method of marking epochs the vision unfolds a different series of events ; but they all ter-

minate at the same point. They all pass over the dispensation, and each brings its own series of events to the end of time. The last "seal" corresponds with the "last trumpet," in chronological arrangement, and each brings us to the Advent and the resurrection. It is evident, also, that events under the sixth seal and those under the sixth trumpet agree together as to time. Let the reader compare them. A fuller enumeration is given under the trumpet than under the seal, but the effect is the same. The scene under the sixth trumpet opens with representations of the loosening of angels bound in the great river Euphrates, which is the symbol of the Mohammedan power, and closes with an angel standing on the land and sea and swearing that time shall be no longer. The impression is that of disaster and mourning, of great anxiety and dismay—just as under the sixth seal. May it not be the final struggle in which all forms of national religion go down together? And if so, is not this the time when the sun and moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall fall, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken? John heard the prophecy of Jesus,

and did not forget it when he saw in the vision the opening of the sixth seal. Then, if the prophecy of Christ and the vision of John relate to the same things; and if the sixth seal and the sixth trumpet agree; and if the river Euphrates is the symbol of the Mohammedan power; and if the breaking down of that power which now dominates the Holy Land be the end of the "tribulation," as it ends the period of Jerusalem's being "trodden down of the Gentiles," do we not find too many converging lines of light pointing to the fulfillment of this prophecy, "immediately after the tribulation of those days," to admit of a single doubt? And it should not be forgotten that under this same seal the vision points to four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds, and commissioned to destroy the earth; and that at this juncture another angel appears and calls upon the four angels holding the four winds to desist till the sealing of the servants of God might be completed. Then follows the sealing of the tribes of Israel. May not this point to the conversion of the Jews, as the last triumph of the Gospel, just

before time ends with the opening of the last seal and the sounding of the last trumpet?

Two more points shall end this extended chapter. The next statement in the passage before us is not susceptible of positive explanation. "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven." This sign appears to come after the shaking of the powers of the heavens, so as not to be identified with the phenomena just mentioned. It is useless to conjecture what it shall be like. And yet it is barely possible that the things symbolized by the appearances noted in the sun, moon, and stars may be taken as the "sign" betokening the Son of man in the heavens. But, following that "sign," whatever it may be, something of fearful import must be expected. "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." This "mourning" may have some relation to what follows the release of Satan from his prison, and the deceiving of the nations, and the gathering of the hosts of sin for the last conflict when the camp of the saints shall be encompassed. And it is not at all unlike the alarm and dismay depicted under the sixth seal and the sixth

trumpet. But in the midst of this wide-spread mourning the Great Event of all breaks suddenly upon the world: "*And they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*" Here all metaphors drop. Rhetorical flourishes sink out of sight. The plainest assertion of the visible coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven, when every eye shall see him, by its simple majesty and unadorned sublimity, surpasses the highest ornaments of human speech.

Following this is the mission of the angels. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Here, again, our expositors who favor the "figurative" advent are compelled to limp. They are obliged to find "figurative" angels, as well as a "figurative" Christ and a "figurative" coming. This they do in the persons of Gospel ministers. Some mention the apostles; but these were nearly all dead, having completed their mission before Titus came to Jerusalem. The idea is that after the destruction of Jerusalem the ministers of the Gospel

went out, sounding the Gospel trumpet among the nations, and gathering the elect into the Church. But this very thing they had been doing for forty years. Paul's grand journeyings by land and sea were past, and the crown of martyrdom was his before the storm of wrath came down upon Jerusalem. These expositors tell us much about the establishment of the kingdom of God after Jerusalem fell, but they fail to inform us in what sense it was then established, in which it had not been established before. As we have seen, the kingdom of God came with power while those who heard Christ were yet living. It came at the appointed time, before the preaching began under the world wide and age-lasting commission; and under it the apostles had gone to the Gentiles with such success that Jerusalem was scarcely superior to Ephesus or Corinth as a center of evangelizing influences. Hence this notion of the "angels" and the "trumpet," and the gathering of the "elect," is absurd upon its face, and contrary to the facts in the case. Christ himself had explained this mission of the angels in his exposition of the parable of

the tares and the wheat. "The harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels." And here they are, sent forth to the "harvest." The coming of the Lord, the clouds, the angels, and the sound of the trumpet, are all found in the epistle to the Thessalonians at the time of the resurrection of the dead; and so in the parable; and so here, and so every-where. The trumpet wakes the dead, and the dead come forth to judgment.

CHAPTER VII.

"THIS GENERATION."

THE last apparent difficulty in the way of the interpretation we have given of the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven is in the thirty-fourth verse, which says, "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." It is argued that these words limit the previously described events, including the signs of the coming, and the coming of the Son of man himself, to the period of the life-time of the people then living. That this verse has controlled many minds in this direction there is no doubt; and for us to pronounce that there is no force in the position, and no ground for hesitancy, would be highly unbecoming. We would not speak with undue confidence where learned men have differed, nor would we dogmatize in the presence of serious

questions of criticism, requiring the most careful and judicious investigations; but, having reached a conviction, not without weighing the evidences, we dare not refuse to set it forth and maintain it.

There are two points that will require attention; namely, the meaning of the phrase "all these things," and the meaning of the word "generation." The object is to ascertain the true application of this verse, and its bearing on our general theme.

We find it possible to make two applications of the words, "all these things." The first will make them correspond with the same words, found in the third verse, in the question, "When shall these things be?" The answer given to this question recognizes its allusion to the coming destruction of the city and temple; and, as we have seen, this answer is distinct from that given to the second question, with reference to the coming of Christ and the end of the world. If we thus separate these questions and answers, and restrict the "these things" in the verse in question to the "these things" in the question and answer above, we discover that

the fulfillment of "all these things," will have nothing to do with the time of the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. And we are free to say that this seems preferable to the resort to the figurative coming of Christ at the time when Christ said he would not come.

But we do not adopt this construction. The phrase, "all these things," in our judgment, relates to the whole of the preceding part of the discourse, and therefore includes the destruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem, the "tribulation of those days," "the sign of the Son of man in heaven," the coming of Christ, the sending forth of the angels, the great sound of the trumpet, and the gathering together of the elect of God. "Heaven and earth shall pass away," but the word of Christ shall not pass away, and if that word is fulfilled, "heaven and earth shall pass away" before "this generation" shall pass out of existence. What else can his language mean? If we understand him at all, the great thought which he utters and emphasizes is the permanency of "this generation." It must last while heaven and

earth endure. Whatever may befall it, it will not pass away.

That this verse is a prophecy can not be called in question. But there is a question here that brings out the real point in issue—the turning, the deciding point in the interpretation of this passage. It is, What does this verse predict? It predicts one or the other of two things, namely, either the speedy fulfillment of "all these things," or the preservation of "this generation" through all subsequent time. If the former is the prediction, we must either restrict "these things" to the subject of inquiry in the first question, as above, or take the ground that the prophecy was a failure—false. Another alternative, which is proposed by some, is to apply the whole discourse, including the "tribulation," the "signs," and the coming in the clouds, to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem, in a figurative sense. But this, as before shown, contradicts the Lord himself, distorts the order of the events, cuts down the tribulation to its mere beginnings, and leaves the mission of the angels utterly unexplained. We can not, therefore, con-

sider this as at all practicable. Then shall we restrict "these things," so as to exclude the tribulation, the signs, the coming, and the gathering of the elect? If any good reason could be assigned for such restriction, we should not object, as no very serious exegetical or doctrinal difficulty would ensue; but there is no need for it in order to maintain the harmony or the integrity of the passage, while the natural order of the words, and the strictly grammatical construction, require the more comprehensive application which we have favored above. Then, we come face to face with the question, Does this verse predict the accomplishment of "all these things" within the life-time of the people then alive? If it does, the facts warrant the assertion that it was false. No man of that day lived till "all these things" were fulfilled. The "tribulation of those days" is not fulfilled yet. This was amply shown in a preceding chapter. It is well known that that tribulation was to include the dispersion of the Jews, and the desolation of the Holy Land, during all the time that should elapse "until the times of the

Gentiles be fulfilled." Were the "times of the Gentiles fulfilled" within a single life-time? Did the captivity of the Jews, and the desolation of Judea, and all that made up that unparalleled tribulation, become *past events* in the life-time of the disciples? Paul said, many years after Christ's death, that "blindness in part hath happened to Israel till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Did that "fullness" come in, and that "blindness" cease, while the disciples were yet living? Who will affirm all this? And yet if it be not so, there is no possibility of claiming that "all these things" were fulfilled within the life-time of the people who heard the prophecy uttered. The people of that day passed away centuries ago, and many of "these things" are not fulfilled to the present hour.

Then shall we abandon the prophecy, and throw away our Bibles, and give up our faith in Christianity, and plunge into the ocean of grand uncertainties to which infidelity invites? Not yet. This prophecy is no a failure. What it predicts is to this day being fulfilled to the astonishment of the

world. Its affirmation is not, that all these things shall come to pass within the brief space of a human life-time, but that "this generation"—this race of people, the Jews—"shall not pass," or cease to be a people, so long as any of these things shall remain unfulfilled; and in this sense, the facts of history attest its wonderful accuracy and faithfulness, and prove the divinity of its author.

This interpretation, of course, turns upon the definition of the word "generation." This word admits of two meanings or applications, and the question is, In which sense is it used in this place? It sometimes applies to the people living at the same time, and then it expresses the average duration of human life, say thirty or forty years. At other times it applies to a distinct class of people, as the Jews, distinguished by descent or blood, or by some marked characteristic or quality. Hence we read of the "generation of the righteous," the "generation of the ungodly," the "chosen generation," the "wicked and sinful generation," the "generation of them that know not God," and of

the "generation of vipers." The application is not to contemporaneous existence, but to the race or stock extending from age to age. This sense of the word is amply sustained by the best authorities, by Scriptural usage, and by the fact that it brings this passage into harmony with the scope of the Savior's discourse, without involving any absurdity, contradiction, or difficulty.

The word "generation" here means the Jews as *a race*. The passage predicts their preservation as a distinct people through the coming centuries, and in this sense no man questions its fulfillment. The subject of discourse was the future of this people, the Jews, and their unexampled and protracted tribulation. Their temple and city were to be destroyed; their whole polity, civil and ecclesiastical, was to be overthrown: their land was to become desolate and the people scattered to the ends of the earth, and become a hissing and a by-word among the nations; and this condition of things was to last till the "times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" and yet, through all these distressing afflictions, "this generation," the Jews, was to be pre-

served as a people! And has it not been preserved? Is not the condition of that people to-day a standing testimony to the truthfulness of our Lord's prophecy, and to the rightfulness of his claims to the Messiahship?

The word translated "generation" has several forms in the original, all from the same root. In this verse it is *genea*, from *ginomi*, and is defined by the lexicographers, a generation, descent, succession; birth, parentage; *a race, breed, kind, sort, species.*" The other forms of the word are *genos* and *genema*, both derivatives from *ginomi*.

The radical idea is, something that is generated or produced, bearing the nature or qualities of the parentage or producing power. It is, therefore, variously applied to a single life, to a race, or breed; or species; and it aptly expresses the idea of a line of descent. Thus Paul understood it when he said, Acts xiii, 26: "Men and brethren, children of the *stock* of Abraham." Here the word rendered *stock* is *genos*, which is substantially the same word, and may be used interchangeably with *genea*. In Matt. xxvi.

29; Mark xiv, 25; and in Luke xxii, 18, this word, in the form of *genema*, is rendered "fruit," and expresses the "fruit of the vine;" in Matt. iii, 7, it is "generation," applying to the "generation of vipers;" and the same in Matt. xii, 34, and Matt. xxiii. 33. But this same class of people, called the "generation of vipers," is called an "adulterous and sinful generation," as in Mark viii, 38, where the word is *genea*, the same precisely as in the verse under discussion, proving satisfactorily that these words are used interchangeably. So, also, do we find *genea* in Matt xi, 16, in Luke vii, 31, in Matt. xvii, 17, in Matt. xii, 39, Acts ii, 40, and in many other places. In most of these instances the idea of *race* or kind is much nearer the thought than mere contemporary life. Indeed, this idea must have the preference in a large number of places where the word occurs; and especially is this true where the character or quality of the people is indicated.

Again, in one place the Apostle Paul says: "Not that I had any thing to accuse my *nation* of—" Acts xxviii, 19—using the con-

mon word *ethnos*; and in another place he says: "I persecuted the Church of God and wasted it; and profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own *nation*." (Gal. i, 14.) Here for *nation* we have *genos*, which is rendered *stock* in Acts xiii, 26, and "generation" in 1 Peter ii, 9: "Ye are a chosen generation." Doubtless when Paul said "my nation," and "mine own nation," he meant precisely the same nation, the Jews; for in the strictest sense this was his nation—his *race* of people, the children of the stock of Abraham. In another place still, having in mind the qualities, perhaps, which the Savior called "evil" and "sinful," he says: "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation.—*genea*—among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Here we have *nation* as a translation of *genea*, the identical word in Matt. xxiv, 34, rendered "generation." Indeed, there is no room for serious doubt that the prophecy before us is a prediction of the permanency of the Jewish people, as a race, in spite of all the disasters before

them. Take an example of the use of this word not yet mentioned. In the preceding chapter, we have this remarkable statement: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." (Matt. xxiii, 36.) There is no doubt that "this generation" here means the same as "this generation" in the place we are considering. But here the connection shows that the "generation" does not lose its identity within a limited number of years, as when taken in the ordinary sense of the word, as with ourselves. The discourse of which this saying is a part is one of the severest in its denunciations of the Jews that our Lord ever delivered. He charges home upon the people around him the sins of their fathers for ages, as well as their own sins, showing that he spoke of the *race*. His language is, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city; that upon you may

come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." Surely the Savior did not mean to say that "you men who now live," slew Zacharias; for that was a deed done many years before any of them were born. But he was speaking of the Jews *as a race*, and identifying the *race* with the past, the present, and the future, and in this sense only did he address them when he said, "Whom *ye slew* between the temple and the altar." They were about to experience a national retribution, the result of the accumulated guilt of ages, a retribution that would last for many hundreds of years; and with the whole sweep of God's providential dealings with this race of people in view, he said: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." This is all plain when we take *genea* in its proper sense of "*descent, race, breed, kind, or species.*"

Then, if the passage in question must be

taken in the sense of a prediction of the speedy accomplishment of "all these things," it fails utterly, and infidelity triumphs, so far as this prophecy is concerned; but if it is a prediction of the wonderful preservation of the Jewish *race*, then it stands out before the world in the sublimity of a constantly fulfilling prophecy, proving the divinity of its author beyond question, and furnishing an argument for our faith which all the arts of unbelief can not successfully assail; an argument that weakens not with the lapse of time, but grows stronger and stronger as the years increase.

Upon this point we can not be too earnest, for much depends upon the conclusion reached. It is no argument against our position that this word is elsewhere used with reference to a single life-time. This is freely admitted. Nor is it worth while for the objector to array the names of eminent expositors who have taken different grounds. Some have done this. But the list of those who maintain the view here taken is equal to the other in every respect. And many whose general interpretation of the connection did

not require it in order to obviate difficulties, or clear the way for their theories, have taken the word in the sense of "race" simply upon philological grounds, and entirely without reference to its bearing on the discussion we have in hands. Indeed, our position is amply sustained by the highest authorities, as well as necessitated by the conditions of the connection in which the word is found. It not only harmonizes the whole prophecy, but it saves it from the sneers of infidelity, and clothes it with a majesty that challenges the admiration of the thoughtful of every school and of every age.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SHEEP AND GOATS.

THE Savior's direct answer to the question, "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" which we have now seen points to events yet in the future, was followed by pointed warnings and suggestions of a practical character, with some minor parables illustrating the duty of watchfulness. After these the discourse presents two very impressive parables, illustrating the kingdom of heaven, as displayed on earth, covering the entire period of the Gospel dispensation.

The first is that of the ten virgins, in which the *denouement* relates to the coming of the Lord; and the closing of the door against those not ready shows that that coming is the time of the judgment when the wise and virtuous share the joy of the Lord,

and the careless and unbelieving are shut out forever. The next is the parable of the talents, one of the most elaborate uttered by our Lord during his ministry. This parable describes a man of wealth about to travel into a far country, calling his servants, and giving them their duties and responsibilities to be observed during his absence. He then departs, and remains away a long time. The parable narrates how the servants severally performed their parts during his absence. But the point in the parable is that when their lord returned he proceeded at once to call his servants to an account for their conduct while he was away. "After a long time, the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them." The account given by each is represented, and the reward bestowed on each is described. The last one was the "wicked and slothful servant." His condemnation is no unimportant part of the proceeding. "Take, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which

he hath And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Now, if any thing is clear in the teaching of these parables, it is that the coming of the Lord ends the dispensation of his kingdom in this world, and that it ends with the general judgment, followed by the rewards and punishments of eternity. In no other way can this distribution of rewards and punishments among the servants on the return of their lord, when he called them immediately to account, be explained.

And then this parable, which so fully illustrates human accountability, and the proceedings and results of the judgment at the coming of the Lord, is followed immediately by that grandest of all descriptions of the judgment-day, which is often called the parable of the sheep and goats. It is to this Scripture we direct attention in this chapter.

This Scripture, Matt. xxv, 31-46, we have just remarked, is often called a parable. But is it, indeed, a parable? It neither begins nor ends as a parable. It is not announced as a parable, is not constructed like a parable, and

will not bear interpretation like a parable. The only thing in it or about it that suggests the idea of a parable is the allusion to the shepherd dividing the sheep from the goats. This, however, does not make it a parable. It is simply a simile or a comparison, and that of a single point. If it had begun by saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a shepherd, who divideth his sheep from the goats;" and if it had continued to speak of the parties divided as "sheep" and "goats," which was done but once; and if it had closely adhered to such things as might naturally and truthfully be said of "sheep" and "goats," we should have seen in it all the characteristics of a parable. But these characteristics are wanting. The illustration drawn from the shepherd is nothing more than a simile in one verse, and in the next a metaphor. If the metaphor had been so extended as to form a parable, the teaching might have been the same; but it was not so extended. In fact, it appears that the Savior, after the parables above mentioned, had reached a point where it was proper to dismiss parables and speak plainly of the proceedings of the day of his

coming ; and this he did in this paragraph, which closed his discourse on his Second Advent.

“ When the Son of man shall come in his glory.” Thus this sublime scene opens with an adverb of time, which relates to a date or an epoch previously mentioned or understood. But no date has been given. “ Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only,” is the positive assertion of Christ. But the order of events had been indicated and the signs given, so that the epoch might be traced in its relations. This is all that can be done. And this opening word, “ when,” relates to the epoch indicated previously ; that is, in the earlier part of the discourse, when he answered the question concerning “ the sign of his coming and of the end of the world.” That epoch is “ after the tribulation ” and after the “ fullness of the Gentiles.” It is at “ the end of the world,” which is the end of the Gospel age.

This coming in his glory, “ with all the holy angels with him,” can be nothing other than his personal coming—his “ coming in

the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." If it mean not this, it is an unmeaning riddle. "Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." This corresponds with Rev. vi, 16; and vii, 17; and xx, 11. The epoch, the order of events, and the proceedings, all point to the same throne and the same glory.

If this be admitted, all real issues are settled. But some will not agree to it. Their creed is in the way. Universalism is endangered. Hence the "figurative" coming, which we have shown to be so groundless and so plainly contradictory to facts as to be the very thing which Christ warned his disciples against believing, is here thrust forward with pretentious distinctiveness, rendering even superfluous attention excusable. Of course, its advocates call this paragraph a parable. But nothing further is needed on that point. We shall deal now with their interpretation.

H. Ballou, one of the fathers of modern Universalism, says: "The time of Christ's coming in glory was the day of Pentecost. His holy angels, with whom he came, were

his chosen apostles. His glory is the Gospel of eternal life. Sheep and goats signify believers and unbelievers. *Right* hand and *left* mean *Gospel* and *law*. The believer stands in the Gospel life; the unbeliever is condemned already, and the wrath of God, in the letter of the law, abideth upon him.”*

The absurdity of this, and its untenableness, soon appeared to Mr. Ballou’s associates and followers, and they adopted another “figurative” exposition. They took up with the idea, so generally favored by orthodox expositors, that a “figurative” advent of some kind took place at the destruction of Jerusalem, and upon that notion they engrafted an interpretation of this alleged “parable,” which became standard with the fraternity. It assumes that the coming was figurative, that the time was when Titus, with his army, came to Jerusalem; that the gathering of all nations was simply an overlooking of human affairs by the Omniscient eye, with reference to the vast national interests involved in the gathering about Jerusalem; that the division

* *Treatise on Atonement*, p. 179.

between sheep and goats was national; that calling those on the right hand into the kingdom was the calling of the Gentiles to inherit Gospel privileges; that the sentence upon those on the left hand was the rejection of the Jews and their expulsion from privileges previously enjoyed; that the eternal life means Gospel or spiritual life, or Gospel privileges, on earth during the Gospel age; and that everlasting punishment means age-lasting punishment to the Jews, and other unbelieving nations that have not the Gospel.

Were it not serious, such expositions would be amusing. Let us do this the honor of a brief consideration.

1. The passage is not a parable, for reasons given.

2. There is no intelligible recognition of the coming of the angels or of their mission.

3. There was no gathering of the nations at Jerusalem, or any other place, for the purposes indicated. The separation of the nations into classes having and not having Gospel privileges required no "gathering," even in a figurative sense. The attempt which is sometimes made to give color to this by quot-

ing from the prophet Zechariah is fallacious. The quotation is Zech. xiv, 2: "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city." The gathering of the nations in the so-called parable is not a gathering "to battle," but to judgment. The passage quoted relates to a capture of the city when half the people were left. This can hardly apply to the capture by Titus, for he did not leave half the city. Although his destruction of it was not so complete as that which afterwards occurred, it was much greater than here described. Besides, this says nothing about the destruction of the city. It only speaks of taking half the people captives.

4. The ground of the division or separation of the parties before the king is inapplicable to the state of things assumed by this exposition. It is based distinctly upon their works. "Come, ye blessed," for ye have done thus and so. The Gentiles were not called to inherit Gospel privileges because of

their previous good deeds. Nor was the separation so rigid between the Jews and Gentiles as between sheep and goats. Besides, those on the right hand are called "righteous;" but no such designation could be given to the Gentiles, or any number of the Gentile nations, at the time of the alleged "figurative" advent and division. And yet, again, the good works accredited to the "righteous," as the reason of their position of honor on the right hand, are plainly personal works, and not of a public or national character. They are accredited with feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned. These actions relate to personal character, and prove that the judgment was of individuals. And, still further, these good deeds were done unto Christ, in being done for those whom he acknowledged as his. Altogether, it is out of the question that this should apply to any "figurative" line of demarkation between the nations with respect to spiritual privileges in this world. The assumption is preposterous.

5. Finally, this representation of the "life eternal" and the "everlasting punishment"

is absurd and contrary to all the facts and intimations of the case. Eternal life can not be predicated of nations. Neither can eternal punishment, except in an accommodated sense, where the nation is blotted out of existence as a nation. But, in the case supposed, no such destruction took place. But this "exposition" alternates the personal and the national, as the necessities of the argument require. In this regard it is both inconsistent and fallacious. There is no logical dexterity that can thus shift premises without betraying weakness. If nations, as nations, are gathered and divided, and if the proceeding is with nations, then nations should receive the award in the outcome. It is not allowable to represent the transaction as a providential dealing with nations, and then resort to a definition of "life" and "punishment" that can only apply to individual experiences.

Our "liberalistic" friends do not falter at ordinary incongruities, but when it comes to accepting the statement that the divine Teacher represented Providence as exercising kingly power over the nations by calling them

before him in judgment, to be dealt with according to their deeds, as nations, and then as proceeding to attribute to them such actions as are not and can not be national actions—such as visiting the sick and persons in prison, and to distribute rewards and punishment for these actions in terms that can not apply to nations,—why, this is rather too much. Their “figurative” judgment becomes embarrassing, and the more so when it is called to mind that the punishment was “prepared for the devil and his angels!” It is a little embarrassing to represent a nation as sent away into “everlasting punishment,” in this world, and at the same time hold that the Gospel of “eternal life” is, and ought to be, preached to that as to all nations.

It is needless to pursue this exposition further. There is no consistency in it, and the foundation is taken away in the showing that there was no such thing as a “figurative” advent at the time Jerusalem was destroyed. The life of liberalism is centered in that figurative coming of Christ, which it affirms took place, when and where Christ himself so emphatically said, “If any man say,

lo, here is Christ, believe it not." The destruction of Jerusalem was a providential dispensation, as was the destruction of Babylon and Nineveh and Tyre, and any number of cities, and in this respect it was a "judgment." The hand of God was in it, as his hand was upon the Jewish nation always, and as it is he that lifts up and casts down the nations; and in no other sense was there any "coming" or "advent" at that time.

Others besides the "liberalistic" interpreters, who have seen a "figurative" advent in the calamities of that time, have confounded the coming of Christ "in his kingdom," which was, indeed, to be within the life-time of those that heard him, with his coming "in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." Mr. Ballou committed this blunder, but located the coming in the clouds where the coming in the kingdom belonged, and was not further out of the way than other figurative interpreters. With that coming in the kingdom, or coming of the kingdom of God with power, the "clouds" and "angels" and "trumpets" are not present; and the coming in the clouds with the angels is never said to

be within the life-time of those that stood before the Savior and heard his words: This, as we have seen, is not a spiritual coming nor a "figurative" coming, but a literal coming at the end of the world, to raise the dead, and wind up the affairs of his kingdom on the earth, as shall be done in the judgment-day. And this view will be further maintained in the succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER IX.

RESTORATION OF THE JEWS.

IT is not essential to the chief design of this treatise that we enter into an exhaustive consideration of the questions relating to the restoration of the Jews to Palestine; and yet this subject has become so interwoven with theories of the Second Advent that we can not do justice to our theme without noticing it to some extent.

Nearly all who contend for a premillennial advent of the Messiah, to set up a literal throne and kingdom in Judea, accept the prophecies in regard to the restoration of Israel in such a literal sense as to look for the literal gathering of the dispersed tribes into the land of their fathers, there to enjoy unexampled prosperity as a nation, in fulfillment of the covenant made with Abraham. There is much in this idea that is fascinating,

and one can scarcely avoid wishing that such a visible verification of prophetic language might occur in the midst of this age of doubt and speculation and worldliness, as a rebuke to the unbelief of the times, and a vindication of the authority of the Sacred Writings. Certainly there is no ground for prejudice against such a consummation, and so far as we can see there is no important doctrine of the Christian system imperiled by the indulgence of such expectation.

In the main this whole matter is left to the judgment of individuals. The Churches do not make it a dogma. Perhaps no denomination is entirely uniform in belief on the subject. In most of the evangelical Churches, some believe in the literal restoration of the Jews; some believe this restoration will take place prior to their conversion, while others think they will first be converted to Christ, and then be gathered back to the land of their fathers; and others, in the same communions, with equal freedom and earnestness, reject the notion of a literal restoration altogether. And we are glad of this liberty; for we do not see how

it is possible for the Church, with any consistency, to put forth an authoritative declaration concerning the meaning of unfulfilled prophecy, without trenching upon the inalienable rights of conscience. It is a matter of opinion, in regard to which each one is left to follow the best light that presents itself to his own mind.

That the verbiage of many of the ancient prophecies seems to teach the restoration of Israel in the latter days is not to be questioned. The passages are numerous, and without citing them here, we remark in general that the view we take of certain New Testament language bearing on the subject will necessarily be decisive of our interpretations of the Old Testament utterances. The questions which have occupied the attention of expositors, and which we must settle in our minds as the basis of our reasoning on the subject, are as to whether the promises to restored Israel may not apply to the spiritual Israel; and whether the conversion of the Jews to the Gospel of Christ will not fulfill all the predictions of the Old and New Testaments with reference to their restoration.

The promises made to Abraham in the covenant which is termed "everlasting" form the basis of the prophecies in question, and point to the "seed" that shall inherit them. These promises contemplate both a literal and spiritual seed, with literal and spiritual privileges and blessings. The literal seed consists of the descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. These are the Jews without question. The spiritual "seed" comprises all who sustain a vital relation to Christ. Such are Israelites indeed, in the Scriptural sense, whether descended from Abraham or not. The literal seed were to enjoy certain temporal advantages, as they did for many years, which were, however, typical of the spiritual advantages and blessing of the spiritual seed. And we may assume without danger of mistake that the spiritual seed were to be the more numerous, the more acceptable to God, and to enjoy the higher assurances of the divine favor. They were to be the true Israel, the chosen of the Lord, and heirs to the promises made to Abraham, in the highest spiritual sense. They were to be children of Abraham, the

seed of Isaac and Jacob, not by blood, but by covenant relation, and in Christ they were to receive all the blessings promised to "the father of the faithful." It is not strange, therefore, that the spiritual prosperity of the Church of Christ should be described in prophetic vision, as the culmination of the glory of Israel. When the circumstances of the prophets are considered, and the nature of the Abrahamic covenant, as developed under the Gospel economy, is taken into the account, it seems perfectly natural, and eminently proper, that the ancient seers should represent the glory of the house of the Lord, in the dispensation of the Spirit, under the imagery of Israel restored. That they did this in many instances no one denies. Then the only question is as to whether those passages in their writings which speak so plainly of the gathering of Israel out of the nations, and planting them in their own land in the enjoyment of peace and prosperity, may be taken as figurative representations of the spiritual Israel, in the enjoyment of the spiritual privileges which constitute the "blessing of Abraham."

Paul's argument in the Epistle to the Romans will certainly bear this construction. His great thought is that the leading design of the calling and separation of the Jews, and of their special privileges, was accomplished in the coming of the Messiah, who was constituted the head of a spiritual family, made up of the spiritual seed of Abraham. He shows that the natural relation to Abraham will no longer avail any thing, but that all spiritual blessings come to the Church through Jesus Christ, and may be enjoyed by all who believe in him. And he shows, further, that believing Gentiles were called to partake of the covenanted mercies which the Jews rejected. This is a fact which was historically developed in his day, and under his own ministry, and in the light of it he tenderly lamented the necessity laid upon him of pronouncing against his own people the solemn judgment of God, which set them aside from their peculiar relation, because of their blindness and obduracy. In his estimation, the Jews lost the priority of inheritance in the Gospel kingdom through their unbelief, and the Gentiles entered into

it by faith. The Jews were broken off from their own good olive-tree, and the Gentiles were grafted into it, not by an arbitrary decision of the Almighty, but in accordance with his eternal purpose to save the believer and condemn the unbeliever. And as this rejection of the Jews was not an arbitrary act, it need not be regarded as final; for, as a people, they may yet return, and repent, and secure the rejected mercy; that is, salvation through Jesus Christ. They were broken off by unbelief, and they may be grafted in again by faith.

So far as we can see, the only thing in this Epistle which can be construed into a prediction of the restoration of the Jews as a nation, is this assurance here given that they shall again be grafted into the good olive-tree, from which they were broken off. But this is far from being a promise of the re-establishment of Judaism. It only looks to their being admitted to the spiritual relation and condition of believing Gentiles. When grafted in again, they come back, not to their ancient national privileges and temple services, but to the forfeited blessings to

which the Gentiles succeeded. In other words, the "grafting in again" represents their conversion to Christ through the instrumentality of the Gospel, instead of their restoration to the home and institutions of their fathers.

This same apostle's argument in the Epistle to the Galatians, too long to be more than summarized, bears upon the same point, and leads to the same conclusion. It shows that believing Gentiles become the "children of Abraham," the children of the covenant, and heirs to all the promises made to Abraham and his seed; that all distinctions on account of nationality, or outward condition are broken down; that a spiritual union with Christ meets all the conditions of spiritual blessings, according to the covenant with Abraham; and that people of all nations, kindreds, and tongues may secure that spiritual union by faith. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us—that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. . . . For ye

are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

So, also, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, writing to converted Jews, quotes the prophecies of Jeremiah, which are often claimed as relating to restored Israel, and applies them to the Christian economy as containing promises of spiritual blessings, fulfilled in all who receive the Gospel. The gift of the Holy Spirit, to abide with the Church as comforter and guide, meets the requirements of the promise of a new covenant "with the house of Israel and the house of Judah." Why, then, may not the actual conversion of the Jews, and their participation in these new covenant privileges under the Gospel of Christ, meet all the requirements of the prophecies concerning their restoration? The typical character of the Jews, as a people, and of all their distinguishing services and ceremonies,

when rightly considered, will go far towards explaining the strong language used by their prophets, which, in the fulfillment, belongs not to the literal, but to the spiritual Israel or seed of Abraham.

As before intimated, those who believe in the literal restoration of the Jews to their own land differ in regard to the means and design of that restoration. Some suppose they are to go back as Jews, and to re-establish themselves as a nation and again set up the services of the temple. But how Christians can believe this is a mystery. Judaism was essentially typical, and therefore temporary. Its priesthood, its sacrifices, its ablutions, and its feasts, were all shadows of good things to come; and those good things have come, and are all found in the Gospel of Christ. Such a restoration of the Jews as would be a restoration of Judaism would be a sad retrogression from the light and freedom of the Gospel to the darkness and bondage of the law. For this no Christian can pray; and we can not believe that any such thing is the subject of promise or prophecy in the Scriptures. But it is extremely difficult to see any way

of interpreting the prophecies so literally as to apply them to a literal return of the Jews to the Holy Land without accepting the literal restoration of the temple and its ceremonies, and the literal return of the Messiah to sit upon the throne of his father David in the city of Jerusalem. The literal return of the Jews, and the restoration of Judaism, and the literal reign of the returned Messiah in Jerusalem as the prince of the house of David, are so linked together in prophecy that their separation is impossible without the greatest violence.

But some suppose the Jews will be converted first, and then return to the Holy Land. Evidently, if they are ever regathered by providential dispensation, it must be after abandoning that unbelief which brought desolation upon them. Their tribulation is parallel with their unbelief. And we should not wonder if a grand Christian nation shall yet occupy the land of Israel and cause the hills and valleys over which the incarnate Redeemer wandered in his humiliation to become vocal with his praises; but we can not see that the prophetic language requires the

Jews, any more than others, to do this. Indeed, if conversion to Christ and incorporation into his kingdom by the new birth obliterates national distinctions so far as to constitute "one body" of all the faithful seed, making all that are Christ's the children of Abraham and heirs according to the promise, there is no necessity for the separation of that people after their conversion; nor can we see that the Jews, after becoming Christians, will have any desire to withdraw from their fellow-Christians in order to establish a distinct community of their own. The impression with many is, that when the Jews are converted they will go back to Palestine and set up a Christian State, and become the leading heralds of salvation to the ends of the earth. This thought is sufficiently fascinating to elicit favorable consideration, but is lacking in support from the Scriptures. We see nothing like it in the discourses of our Lord or in the writings of the apostles. On the contrary, the idea that the Jews will be the last nation on earth to receive the Gospel is by no means obscurely hinted in the New Testament. They had the first offer of the

Gospel, and rejected it; and now their turn to receive it will not come again till all other nations have had the offer of it. "The first shall be last, and the last first."

The dispersion and desolation of the Jews, as is elsewhere shown, constitute important parts of their "tribulation," which is described by our Lord himself, as lasting "until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." This places their conversion at a very late period in the Gospel age. So, also, the Apostle Paul declares that the "blindness" which has come upon them through unbelief—the judicial blindness which is part of their national retribution—is to last "until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Whatever "the fullness of the Gentiles" and "the times of the Gentiles" may include, these expressions undoubtedly refer to the preaching of the Gospel among all nations for a witness unto them; so that "the times of the Gentiles" are not fulfilled while some of the nations remain destitute of the knowledge of Christ. This, therefore, sets aside the notion that the restored Jews are to be the harbingers of Christ in bearing his salvation to other na-

tions. But, as in the apostle's day, so in subsequent times there has been of the Jews "a remnant according to the election of grace." A few received Christ when he came; some others were converted through the ministry of the apostles; and all along through the centuries here and there a Jew has been converted, keeping before the Church the possibility of recovering the blindest and most inveterate of the enemies of Christ, and pointing to the day of power and grace when the great body of the descendants of Jacob shall be gathered into the Gospel kingdom.

But, if we read the prophecies correctly, this grand consummation will be near the time of the end. It will be after the fullness of the Gentiles; after the tribulation of the days of darkness and anguish to the Jewish race, and, therefore, near the time of the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven, which is to take place "immediately after the tribulation." We purposely speak upon this subject both briefly and frankly, feeling that every one who attempts to tread the ground of unfulfilled prophecy should do it with sincerity and modesty. This is not for-

bidden ground. No flaming sword warns us away. Whatsoever is written is written for our learning; but these outline-pictures of coming events, thrown dimly upon the evening horizon—these shadowings forth of things yet unseen, except as revealed to prophetic eyes, were not intended for our gratification, but to furnish the basis for the cumulative proofs of the divinity of the Gospel with which the Church is to be favored in all the coming ages.

But this remark should be added. Even a future gathering of the Jews in the Holy Land, if that should be found necessary to fulfill the prophecies, does not prove the premillennial advent; for all that such gathering implies, could come to pass, under Providential guidance, without the bodily presence of Jesus Christ on the earth. The acceptance of the proposition that the Jews will return does not carry with it the doctrine of the personal reign of Christ in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER X.

THE MILLENNIUM.

THE subject of the millennium has great fascination for many minds. The emotions which the contemplation of it excites are often elevated and devout, leading to an increase of religious fervor and activity in Christian duties. And especially is this true when the mind is not prepossessed with theories which lead to controversy and beget a spirit of disputation, but simply looks forward to the day of the Gospel's triumph with ardor and hopefulness. But it is a subject which takes us into the realm of unfulfilled prophecy—enchanted ground—where it becomes us to step carefully and reverently, knowing that our perception of the lights along the pathway is necessarily imperfect.

Ever since the days of the apostles the Church has looked forward to a better day,

when the reigning powers of idolatry and superstition, and all forms of false religion, shall give place to the kingdom of God, and when Jesus Christ will be confessed as Lord among all the nations of the earth. It is impossible to interpret the Scriptures without anticipating a universal diffusion of the knowledge of God and of his Son Jesus Christ, to the extent that the religion of the Bible shall become the religion of mankind throughout the earth. But when shall this better day dawn? By what agencies shall it be brought about? Will the present dispensation of the Gospel be able to effect it? or must there be a supersedure of the Gospel plan of evangelizing the world? Are we authorized to expect the bodily presence of Jesus Christ on earth, to supplement the preaching of the Gospel for the conversion of the world?

These are questions which have been before the Church for ages, and, as they are answered in different ways, the people answering are known as Millenarians and Anti-millenarians, and as Pre-millenarians and Post-millenarians. The simple announcement that one is a Millenarian does but little to-

wards indicating his opinions, as men of widely differing views will claim to believe in a Millennium of some kind. There are but few Christians who will accept the title of Anti-millenarians without some sort of qualification. The great division of the Church is into classes known as Pre-millenarians and Post-millenarians—a division which does not follow denominational lines, or imply serious differences upon evangelical doctrines or on questions of vital piety and practical godliness. It is a difference in belief as to whether Christ's second coming will take place at the beginning or the ending of the millennial period; and, of course, it involves different ideas of the character of the millennium—for a millennium, with Christ present in person, with the saints of all ages living in the resurrection state, is widely different from one where Christ reigns spiritually in the hearts of his people, who yet live in their mortal bodies while he remains in heaven. It is to this division of sentiment our minds are turned in considering the second coming of the Son of man. Will he come in person and raise the righteous dead, and establish a literal

kingdom in this world, and reign a thousand years and thus subdue the world to himself? or will he come at the end of time and raise the dead and judge the world, and thus finish the history of earthly life by introducing the eternal state of retribution? Pre-millennialists assert the former, and Post-millennialists the latter.

The Pre-millennialist necessarily takes the ground that the Gospel is inadequate to subdue the world to Christ; that it was not ordained to that end; that it was only given as a witness to admonish the nations, and to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord, somewhat as John the Baptist prepared the way among the Jews for the first appearance of the Messiah. This, of course, disputes the finality of the dispensation of the Spirit, and dampens the ardor of all expectation that the existing agencies in the Church are to succeed in pulling down the strongholds of sin. In spite of all professions to the contrary, it discourages zeal in the missionary cause and in all efforts to build up the Church beyond the limits of the present Christian civilization. It awakens a morbid feeling of dis-

content—a feeling of fretfulness and impatience with what surrounds us in life, and an unhealthful looking for a vengeful visitation upon the prevailing ungodliness and upon ungodly men. It begets and fosters an unspiritual longing to “know Christ after the flesh;” to see his person; to bask in his favor, and share the honors which an earthly kingdom brings. That it kindles the fires of devotion and lifts the soul into an atmosphere of warmth and loyalty to Christ, and contempt for the world, is not disputed; but whether the fervid zeal it inspires is as purely spiritual, as lofty and unselfish, as that which comes from calmly trusting the unseen Savior, and expecting his Spirit, through the Gospel, to conquer the world and bring the nations to acknowledge the cross as the power and wisdom of God, is so extremely doubtful that the query is justifiable.

The Pre-millennial Advent theory is based entirely upon a Scripture which is acknowledged by all to be very obscure, in addition to being found in the book of Revelation, in the midst of symbols extremely difficult of explanation and application. We say this

without thinking to disparage the book, or intimating any thing against its authority or usefulness; for there is much in it that is of great value in illustrating doctrines and in stimulating the zeal of the Church; but there is no wisdom in founding upon its symbolic utterances important doctrines not found in the plainer Scriptures, and requiring obscure and difficult meanings to be forced upon passages otherwise clear and easily comprehended. We say the theory in question is founded entirely upon the one passage. There is no doubt that this is correct; for, while other passages are quoted in its support, and pressed into its service, not without violence, this is the only one that speaks definitely of the "thousand years" or hints that any such period separates the resurrection of different classes. In the absence of this passage from the Scriptures the theory would probably never have been invented, and certainly would have few, if any, advocates in the present day.

We quote the passage in full, and shall endeavor to ascertain whether it is a sufficient foundation for the doctrine in question: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, hav-

ing the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the Word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his

prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." (Rev. xx, 1-8.)

The first thing necessary to the premillennialist is to find something which is not in the passage, which is not even implied in it, and for which there is no room in the order of events set forth—the personal Advent of Christ, at the beginning of the "thousand years" of Satan's bondage. It is therefore assumed by some that the "angel" which had "the key of the bottomless pit, and the great chain in his hand," was none other than Christ himself. The groundlessness of this assumption is so apparent that little time need be spent upon it. It would never have been thought of but for the emergency of the theorist. It might with equal propriety be assumed that in every instance in this book, where reference is made to an angel, Christ himself is meant, than which we can scarcely imagine a more glaring absurdity. Leading Pre-millenarians have felt this, and have claimed that since the archangel is

mentioned as accompanying the Lord in his descent to raise the dead, the appearance of the "angel" coming down from heaven in this vision, implies the presence and coming of Christ himself. But the improbability that the coming of Christ should take place at such a time, and for such a purpose, and under such conditions, and be entirely omitted in the vision portraying it, while a subordinate is made so conspicuous, is so great that we wonder that any student of the Scriptures can possibly believe it. And yet this improbable notion of an unmentioned and unimplied advent is the sole foundation of the belief that Christ comes to reign on earth when Satan is chained. We humbly submit that the ground is too narrow and too flimsy to support a doctrine so far-reaching in its results. There is absolutely no intimation whatever in this celebrated passage of Scripture, that Christ descends from heaven at the beginning of this "thousand years."

The next point is the assumption that this "thousand years" separates the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked. There is possibly a little more in

the passage that seems to favor this assumption than the former, but even this is neither asserted nor implied. The word "resurrection" is not applied to the "souls that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus." It is simply said of them that "they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." The numbers included in this company are not given; nor is it at all hinted that it refers to all the righteous dead. Indeed, the specification of a particular class of the saved—them that were beheaded, the martyrs—implies that the great multitude of the saved were not included. And this implication is confirmed and placed beyond reasonable doubt, by the fact that in the scene described in the same chapter, as following the "thousand years," there is an appearance of Christ sitting upon "the great white throne," and a general resurrection, when the sea and death and *hades* all deliver up their dead, who are judged according to their works, while the intimation is clear that some of this company were "found written in the book of life." There is no reason for opening the "book of life" on that occasion, if

all the righteous had been raised and crowned a thousand years, and if all the subjects of that resurrection and judgment were doomed to the "second death."

We have said that the word "resurrection" is not applied to the souls that lived and reigned with Christ. But it is supposed to be implied in the fact that they "lived and reigned." This is not clear. If they did not, and could not in any sense, "live" without their bodies, the assertion that they "lived" might indicate that they were risen from the dead; but none who believe in the separate existence of souls will deny that the word "lived," as it occurs in this vision, is properly applied to "souls" "absent from the body, and present with the Lord."

But the words, "This is the first resurrection," are usually so applied as to denote a resurrection at the beginning of the "thousand years." Is this correct? Let the passage be read again. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." Which is the first resurrection? Evidently that which occurred when "the rest of the

dead *lived again.*" This is the natural construction, and would not be questioned but, for the seeming paradox, which arises from the supposed fact that those who "lived" and those who "lived again," must be understood as living in the same sense; that is, in their bodies. But the paradox is not so violent as is the assumption that all the dead in Christ were raised up at the beginning of the thousand years—that none of the rest of the dead were "found written in the book of life," when the books were opened. And if this be the right construction, the meaning is that the living of the martyrs was not the resurrection, and that the "first resurrection" is that which comes when the thousand years are finished, and causes the dead to "live again." But if the phrase, "this is the first resurrection," be taken so far out of its connection as to apply to the "living" of the martyrs, it may imply that they are favored with a "resurrection" before the time of the general rising, which is "at the last day." The conclusion following this interpretation leads to no doctrinal or exegetical difficulty. It is not unreasonable, and certainly not un-

scriptural, to suppose that the martyrs, as a class, are favored with some pre-eminence in the heavenly state. Their peculiar testimony to the truth is followed by distinction of some sort, and if it take the form of the restoration of their bodies in anticipation of the general resurrection, there is no ground of objection to it perceptible. Christ's glorified body is already in heaven, and so are the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, and there is little room for doubt that the bodies of the saints, whose graves were opened when Christ was crucified, and who came out of their graves after his resurrection, accompanied their ascending Lord, with the convoy of angels, and were presented as the beginning of that harvest which shall be gathered when the trumpet sounds. And if there are some glorified bodies from earth now in heaven—if a number awoke from earthly graves, and ascended with Christ,—it is not unreasonable to suppose that at some other grand epoch in the history of redemption, another company of saints—martyrs for the truth—may be gathered from their graves by the angels of God, and be

quietly borne to heaven, to live and reign with Christ, long before "the resurrection at the last day." Such an event would meet all the requirements of this Scripture, and much more consistently than by assuming an advent which is not mentioned, and which could not have been omitted if it had belonged to the scene described.

The benediction pronounced upon those who share the "first resurrection" must not be overlooked. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." If we suppose that this refers to the "rest of the dead," as it seems to do, the sense is, that, though they do not share the peculiar honor of the martyrs, they are nevertheless truly blessed; and, although they rise in the general resurrection, in close connection with those whose doom is the "second death," that ultimate result of sin shall have no power over them. They are as truly saved as if there were no second death. Their immortality is assured. They are "blessed and holy." And, on the other hand, if the phrase, "This is the first resurrection," be so applied as to mean that the martyrs had

risen at the beginning of the "thousand years," the assurance is given that their resurrection, though special, and peculiar in that it occurred before the advent, is not inferior on that account, but is to them the final assumption of immortality and incorruptibility. We thus present two interpretations, each consistent in itself, and each in better harmony with all the facts and terms of this remarkable Scripture, than that which places the advent of Christ, and the resurrection of all the saved, at the beginning of the millennial imprisonment of Satan. In selecting the hypothesis most certainly correct, we must be guided by the application of the word "this" in the clause that points to the "first resurrection." Taken in its immediate connection, it relates to the living "again" of the "rest of the dead"—the pious dead only being in mind—but it is not impossible that, as the whole picture is drawn in detached lines, this independent sentence may allude to the class distinguished in the heavenly state. We thus leave the subject, assured in mind that it is impossible to find any sufficient ground for an advent here,

where it is neither named nor recognized, in fact, in process, or in result. It is needless to notice the other Scriptures which have been claimed as supporting the Premillennial Advent theory, as they are examined in other connections, and shown to yield a different sense.

But what of the millennium, if the idea of the coming of Christ at the imprisonment of Satan be abandoned? To state precisely the condition of the world at the coming of Christ, whether that coming be at the beginning or ending of the millennium in question, is one of the most difficult tasks the expositor of the Scriptures is called to perform. Turn as he will, there are seeming contradictions to be encountered. To admit this is due to candor, and where it is not admitted we suspect the presence of prepossessions unfavorable to impartial exegesis.

There are two classes of Scripture to be considered—those passages that represent the carelessness and worldliness of the unbelieving and unready, and those that describe the universal triumph of the Gospel, and the prosperity of the Church in the latter days.

By looking only at one class we get distorted views. Some of the first class look as if the world were never darker or more forgetful of God than in the hour when the Son of man shall come "as a thief in the night."

"But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." This shows that some will be going on in the ordinary pursuits of life, forgetful of spiritual things, as at the present time, and as in the time before the flood. And that question in the parable of the widow and the unjust judge, "Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" looks in the same direction, and seems to suggest a doubt whether any will be found faithful.

But these relate to the unbelieving. They give the worldly side of the picture. There is no doubt that "the day of the Lord" will come unawares upon many, and surprise them in their sins. But there is another side. The Church is to grow, and spread far and wide her holy influences, so as to leave the unthinking worldliness of the age without excuse. "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it." The name of Christ shall be known from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. The knowledge of God shall cover the earth. "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." The time will come when it shall be said, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever." What, then, must be the conclusion from this seeming contrariety of description?

In all probability, some of the passages

relating to the glory of the latter days, in their ultimate meaning, look to the condition of things in the regenerated earth, beyond the conflagration. And yet, as we have said, we can not explain the Scriptures without anticipating a day of better things for the Church than has been realized. The imprisonment of Satan denotes curtailment of his power, and increased restraint upon his actions, possibly to the extent of hindering his access to men in this world. This will be great gain in advantage for the truth. It will give the Gospel access to the heart, impeded only by the opposition of the depravity within. Under such conditions, the relative power of the Gospel will increase; the accumulated evidences of its divinity will shine out with a luster unseen before; and the quickened activities of Christian people will add to its efficiency, as its conquests are extended, and its victories multiplied. But will every living soul be converted? We dare not assume this. The universal spread of the Gospel neither implies the removal of depravity from human nature nor the submission of every sinner to the sway of divine grace. Men

will still be descended from Adam, born after the flesh, and need to be "born again." But Christian intelligence will banish superstition. Idolatry will cease. Apostate Churches will be reformed or destroyed. False religions will be overthrown. Enlightened governments, permeated with Christian principles, will displace tyrannies, and religious liberty will become the heritage of all the nations. This much may be expected, and such a millennium will be indescribably glorious. But the old fight with inward corruption will go on. Carnality, and selfishness, and pride, and love of the world, and love of power, will struggle for the mastery, calling for watchfulness and self-denial, and keeping up all the conditions of a real probation. And some will be overborne. Infidelity will find votaries. Men of evil passion will love darkness rather than light. Such will shut their eyes to the brightest beams of the brightest day of Gospel light, and when Satan is loose, they will be ready to join in the battle against the truth. Thus, in the final day of the Lord's coming, will worldliness and sin be found in the earth. So we read the

prophecies. But we "see through a glass darkly." The best lights that reach our vision disclose only the mountain peaks of the land ahead. The valleys and plains of the landscape lie beneath the mists. We must wait till prophecy materializes into history, and then the morning star shall give place to the risen sun.

CHAPTER XI.

THE COMING AT THE RESURRECTION.

WE come now to consider the fact that the Second Coming of Christ is connected with the resurrection of the dead.

This is implied in some of the parables, and other Scriptures, which we have already noticed, wherein the "harvest" is described, and the sending forth of the angels to gather the elect, and for the purpose of gathering out of the kingdom them that offend, is mentioned. But our business in this chapter is with those passages which connect these two events together, by positive statement, and in terms that can not be misunderstood, or otherwise construed.

And for the minute and definite statements which we now seek, we properly turn to the Epistles, where the different phases of the whole subject are clearly brought out,

though sometimes in terse expressions, and in incidental allusions. In some places the leading topic is the resurrection, and in others the advent; but always and every-where the inspired writers carry the thought that the coming of Christ is at the end of the Gospel period, and for the purpose of raising the dead and bestowing the final reward.

A brief analysis of Paul's argument on the resurrection of the dead will be in place here, as we find it in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. He first affirmed the fact that Christ arose, and adduced testimony to prove that fact; he then connected with that fact the resurrection of the dead generally, without limitation or restriction, so that these two facts must stand or fall together. "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen." After this he speaks of the source and extent of death and of the resurrection. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

It is important to notice that the resurrection of the dead, which is so closely linked to the resurrection of Christ, is not confined to a class of the dead, to the exclusion of the others. It includes *all that die in Adam*. It is a general or universal resurrection. This fact is of particular significance in its bearing on the question of a premillennial advent. But, having asserted the fact of a general resurrection in such universal terms, as if on purpose to guard against the abuse of this fact which distinguishes modern "liberalistic" interpretations, he introduces, with a disjunctive, the necessary limitations of the results that follow, by recognizing the "order" of the resurrection. "But every man in his own order." The word "order" means

band or company. It indicates class. There are two orders in the resurrection, as there are two classes to arise. These orders are the first and the last; the good and the bad; "the just and unjust." The one is a resurrection unto life, and the other is a "resurrection of damnation." Every man's "own order" is that company or band or class to which he belongs by moral fitness or spiritual affiliation. The first order consists of those who are "Christ's at his coming." These share the resurrection of life. To this class or order the remaining part of the apostle's discourse, in this chapter, is confined. The other class he purposely leaves in the dark. They come forth at the call of Christ, but the result of their resurrection is not here declared. But it is not a resurrection to glory and honor.

The next point to be observed is the fact that the resurrection of the dead takes place at the time of the coming of Christ. "They that are Christ's at his coming." Why should the "coming" of Christ be introduced into this argument at all, if not because of its relation to the resurrection of the dead?

There can be no explanation of this language, and no reason assigned for its occurrence in this place, except on the ground that he comes to raise the dead. The resurrection is not a translation or mere transition at the hour of death. It is a rising again of the dead—a palpable and stupendous fact; a miracle of wisdom and power, the glory and consummation of the mediatorial work of our risen Lord. It is a work worthy the coming and kingdom of Christ, the fulfillment of his grandest purpose, the outcome of his incarnation and sacrifice. “Then cometh the end.” The work of Christ’s kingdom is done. The mission of the Gospel to humanity is accomplished. The “harvest” is past. The “end” mentioned is the end of the mediatorial reign; the end of the Gospel dispensation; the end of human probation; the end of time. Hence this passage antagonizes premillennialism. The coming of Christ is not to “set up” his kingdom on the earth, for the purpose of putting down anti-Christian rule and authority and power; but it is at the end of the reign which will have accomplished that

work. It is "when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." It is, therefore, after the work is done, which premillennialism supposes he is coming to do. And this is confirmed by what is said of the destruction of death. This is the last enemy to be destroyed. Its destruction is the final victory. Beyond it there is no conflict. There remains no rule or authority or power to be put down. And death is destroyed by the resurrection, at the coming of Christ. But if death is then destroyed, all the dead are raised: for it is false to fact, and absurd in itself, to affirm that death is destroyed, when the righteous live again, if all the unrighteous still abide in death. The destruction of death is the abolition of its power over the human race. Death and *hades* deliver up their dead at the appearance of the Son of man and the great white throne.

The next passage we cite is Phil. iii, 20, 21: "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our

vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." That this connects the resurrection with the coming of Christ there can be no doubt. The resurrection of the righteous dead is always uppermost in the mind of the apostle, and here he speaks of the change awaiting the glorified, without reference to a different class. That which he calls "our vile body" can not be other than the mortal body in which we live, the body of our humiliation, which is tending to corruption. The Lord Jesus Christ himself shall come from heaven and change this vile body by his own power, and clothe it with immortality and incorruption, and thus fashion it "like unto his own glorious body." Hence John says, "When he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." This is why the coming of Christ from heaven is the "blessed hope" of the Christian. It is the time of "the manifestation of the sons of God." "When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

The only effort "liberalists" have made to explain this passage, without connecting the coming of the Savior and the resurrection, is to assume that it relates to a change in the condition of the Church in consequence of the destruction of Judaism. The coming of Christ from heaven is claimed to be that "figurative" coming we have so frequently had occasion to mention; and "this vile body" is represented as the old Jewish Church, and "his glorious body" is called the Christian Church. The "change" is said to be the change in the Church, wrought when Christ came "figuratively" at the destruction of Jerusalem, and destroyed the old polity and instituted the new polity, or that which distinguishes the Gospel kingdom. Of course this is unworthy of the name of criticism or exposition, and unworthy of formal reply; and yet men of culture, who pride themselves in their advance of thought beyond the limitations of the creeds, have put it forth in sober earnestness. It seems no obstruction to such expositors, that the old Jewish Church was never changed into the glorious Christian Church, and that Paul,

and those addressed, were living in the Christian Church, and not in the Jewish Church, and had been for some time, while they were looking for the Savior, and anticipating the day when "this vile body" should be changed. But enough.

We now turn to 1 Thess. iv, 13-18: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

This describes the personal coming of our Lord to raise the dead, or it is utterly misleading. By "them which are asleep," the apostle undoubtedly means the dead—those that have fallen asleep in Christ. These are distinguished as a class, from those that "are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." And this coming is neither spiritual nor figurative, but personal and literal. It is the coming of the Lord "himself." It is his public revelation in the "clouds of heaven," when every eye shall see him; for with this coming are the "shout," and the "voice of the archangel," and "the trump of God," so connected as to show the character of the event. This is that "great sound of a trumpet" which is mentioned in Matt. xxiv, 31, and also in 1 Cor. xv, 52. It always relates to the resurrection of the dead.

Another important fact is here brought out. Not only do the dead arise at the coming of Christ, but the living shall then be "changed." The dead and the living are the two classes mentioned. The dead in Christ are specifically in mind, while the

unbelieving dead are unrecognized in this passage. Perhaps some thought the living would have an advantage over the dead in the day of the advent, so that it would be better for them not to die. But the apostle controverts this idea. In that day all the saints shall have equal advantage. The living shall not ascend to meet the Lord in advance of the dead in Christ. These shall "rise first;" that is, before the living ascend. Then, when the dead are raised, and the living changed, all the saved "shall be caught up together." This "change" in the living, which is at once equivalent to death and the resurrection, in its effect upon the mortal body, is more particularly set forth in 1 Cor. xv, 51, 52: "Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." As a living man, writing to living men, of the living and the dead, he naturally identified himself, and those to whom he wrote, with the living, without implying that he or they

would still be living when the great event described should actually occur. But, whether he or they should be living or dead, the great thought was that "all" should be "changed" in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. They were to be changed from corruption to incorruption, from mortality to immortality. And being thus changed, the distinction between these classes is obliterated. They all pass into the immortal state together, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. Thus the coming of Christ terminates the reign of death on earth.

To multiply proofs or extend arguments on this point would be superfluous. There are incidental questions connected with the Scriptures cited, which might be considered here, but which must necessarily come up in other connections, so that we pass them now to avoid repetition. These relate to the other events which are to follow the coming of the Lord, such as the gathering of the nations, the resurrection of the wicked, the judgment, the retribution, and the conflagration. Each in its place will receive due

attention, and in the outcome it will be found that nothing essential to the main argument is overlooked. The single point in hand, that Christ's literal coming in person is to raise the dead, being sufficiently made out, we close the chapter, expecting to show that the final judgment is just as plainly connected with this same personal advent.

CHAPTER XII.

THEORIES OF THE RESURRECTION.

ALTHOUGH not necessary to the completeness of the argument in hand, it will, perhaps, aid in its appreciation, to fix our thoughts upon the character and extent of the resurrection which is expected to take place at the coming of Christ. As we have seen, the Scriptures bear explicit testimony to the fact that the immediate object of the *parousia* is to raise the dead. Will there, then, be a real rising again? And if so, to what extent, and what shall be the result of it? We do not propose an exhaustive discussion of these points, nor to consider the various theories of the resurrection propounded in theology, only so far as they touch the question of the advent. It is assumed in this treatise that there will be a general resurrection, of the just and the unjust, each class

in order, at the coming of Christ, preparatory to the judgment. This, of course, antagonizes the notion that the righteous dead will be raised up an indefinite period—or the definite period of a thousand years—before the end of time, to live again upon the earth in its present condition, before its purification and renovation. But this point, having been more fully considered in another place, will not be enlarged upon here.

The theory which more especially calls for our attention is that which is sometimes known as the progressive theory. It is largely favored by "liberalists," and indeed by all classes that deny the personal coming of our Lord to raise the dead. We state it briefly, in the language of a distinguished writer, in one of the leading periodical organs of Universalism, as follows: "The truth is, that the resurrection is a progressive work. It is a translation from the earthly to the spiritual life. It is simply a release of the spirit of man from his corporeal surroundings. He continues to live. The essential element that constitutes man a rational and intelligent entity does not die when it lays off its tab-

ernacle of clay, but is given greater facility to do its exalted ministry as an angel of God."

This is a "progressive" statement, the first sentence being explained by the second, the second by the third, and so on to the end. The "progressive work," according to this theory, is not to be construed so as to imply that there is progression in the process of the resurrection, as an individual experience, but that the matter of passing into the resurrection state is a progressive work, in opposition to the common idea of a simultaneous resurrection. The translation from the earthly to the spiritual life does not take place by degrees, but is accomplished at once as to the individual, while it is progressive as to the race. The idea is, that the soul possesses all the elements of the spiritual or resurrection body, and that its emergence from the corporeal structure, the earthly body, in the event of death, is in itself the resurrection. Hence the statement that "it is simply a release of the spirit of man from its corporeal surroundings." It being "simply" this, and nothing more, there is no radical

difference between death and the resurrection from the dead, and no perceptible distinction in time between the two events, if we can call them two events. Death is the resurrection; for death releases the spirit from its corporeal surroundings, removes the "intelligent entity" from its "tabernacle of clay," and translates it from the earthly to the spiritual life beyond.

This is no misconception of the doctrine of a progressive resurrection. We take it in the language of its friends, and clothe it in the garb they have prepared for it, and shall deal with it in all honesty. If it does not confound death and the resurrection, at least as to time, we fail to comprehend it. Death does all for the man that this theory ascribes to the resurrection; and the two events are so related, if they are not identical, that one never takes place without the other.

We object to this theory that it is liable to the censure that Paul passed upon some heretical theories of the resurrection in his day. He encountered some who affirmed that "the resurrection was past already:"

and they doubtless argued the subject learnedly, and made their theory appear plausible; for the apostle assures us that they had "overthrown the faith of some." It is clear, however, that the apostle did not agree with them. Whatever he taught concerning the resurrection of the dead, it is certain that he favored no theory that would allow it to be said of those gone before, that their "resurrection is past." This is the very point he denied and censured. But if the resurrection occurs at death,—if it is simply a release of the spirit of man from its corporeal surroundings,—how are we to avoid saying of the dead of other generations, and even of our friends who have recently died, that with them "the resurrection is past already?" There is, indeed, no possibility of avoiding this; and if the theory is correct, Paul might as well have complained of any who asserted that the death of the dead was past, and charged them with "overthrowing the faith," as to complain of those who affirmed that the dead had already passed into the resurrection state.

We object to this "progressive" theory,

again, that it destroys the very idea of the resurrection of the dead. It teaches instead the resurrection of that which never died. Of the man "translated from the earthly to the spiritual life," it says, "He continues to live." How, then, was he dead? Only as to his body—the "tabernacle of clay." But does the "tabernacle of clay" ever live again? Does the body that died have any share whatever in the rising again? Not according to this theory. Its teaching is, that the spirit is released from its earthly surroundings; that it lays off its corporeal incumbrance and never puts it on again. It passes at once to a higher plane of life, in total separation from all that is material. That which died never lives again, and that which "continues to live" never dies. Where, then, is the resurrection of the dead? There is, in this theory, absolutely no room for the idea of the dead living again. There is a "translation" of the spirit, a separation from the body, which might be called a promotion, but we see no resurrection. No intelligible conception of a resurrection can be formed without the idea of something living again which had

been dead; but this radical idea of a resurrection is excluded utterly. When Christ arose, he said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore." His was a resurrection, a coming back to life.

Time intervenes between death and the resurrection. Four days intervened between the death and resurrection of Lazarus, whom Christ raised from the dead. At least two nights and a day intervened between the death of Christ and his resurrection; for he did not rise till the morning of the third day after his burial. And time does intervene between the death and the rising again of those who are "absent from the body, and present with the Lord;" for when Christ comes to raise the dead, he brings his saints along with him. In the present argument, it matters not how short the time, or how long, so that some time separates between the two events. If time intervenes at all, one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The intervening time, be it much or little, destroys the theory that makes the resurrection a mere promotion of the spirit.

But the advocates of this progressive theory sometimes attempt Scriptural argument in its support. Take a specimen: "If the 'God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,' is 'not the God of the dead, but of the living,' where can we find evidence of the doctrine that all men who die, sleep on, insensible, for myriads of ages, till the end of the physical world, and till a general resurrection of the dead? And if the resurrection of the dead will take place all at once, at the end of all time—things—to whom did the dead belong during all the ages before that period? Not to God; for he is 'not the God of the dead, but of the living.'" This is a fair example of "liberalistic" reasoning from the Scriptures. If it means any thing, it is that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are not dead, but living. They died, but they "lived on." It means, further, that they were already in the resurrection state—that the resurrection with them was "past"—when the Savior said that "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." And, if so, they were "ascended," for that is about what our "progressive" theorists

mean by the resurrection,—and if they were “ascended,” so also should the “patriarch David” have been “ascended;” but Peter did not so understand the subject, on the day of Pentecost, when he spoke as the Spirit gave him utterance. His theme was the resurrection of Christ, and, addressing himself to the Jews, Peter said, “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. . . . For David is not ascended into the heavens.” (Acts ii, 29-34.) And yet, notwithstanding the fact that “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living,” he was the God of David, just as he was the God of Abraham; and David lived unto God, just as Abraham did; and Abraham was dead and buried as truly as David was. Hence, when the Jews said to Jesus, “Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?” he never disputed the fact that Abraham and the proph-

ets were dead. He admitted all that, and yet made his point, which was, "Before Abraham was, I am." With respect to the earthly life—the life of the body—they were all dead. They "saw corruption." The resurrection, with them, was not a past event. They were "not ascended." But with respect to the "intelligent entity," the soul, they continued to live. They were "absent from the body, but present with the Lord." They were released from their "corporeal surroundings," but, in the thought of the inspired writers, this release did not constitute the resurrection of the dead. It was a basis for argument, and confounded the Sadducees, who denied all separate existence; and the fact that the soul lived on, inspired the hope that the body should be raised again; but there is not a syllable in the whole book of God that warrants the belief that this separate existence of the soul is the resurrection of the dead. The living soul did not die, and it does not rise again. The resurrection of the dead is the rising up of that which died, or it is nothing. Death destroys life, and the resurrection destroys death.

This "argument" of the liberalists antagonizes the soul-sleeping doctrine of the Second Adventists, and of all materialists; but it touches no point of the issue we make with Universalism, and every other "ism" that denies the rising of the dead at the coming of Christ, at the end of time. Evangelical Christians hold no such materialistic crudities as that "all who die sleep on, insensible"—except as to their bodies—"for myriads of ages, till the end of the physical world, and till a general resurrection of the dead." This cheerless doctrine finds no place in the creeds or song or prayers of living Christians, nor is it at all necessary to an intelligent belief in the future, simultaneous resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. The Scriptures afford ample ground for believing in the continued existence of the soul in the separate state, and for expecting its ultimate reunion with the body, raised, changed, and glorified, "at the last day."

The language of the Bible on the subject of the resurrection of the dead is utterly unlike the language of this "progressive" theory. The sacred writers never confound

death and the resurrection. They never speak of the resurrection of that which "continues to live." They never make the "spirit," the "intelligent entity," the subject of the resurrection at all, much less the exclusive subject of it. They speak only of the resurrection of "the dead," not of the living. Paul says, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body." He also says of the Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming from heaven, that he "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." The body, not the soul, is the subject of the resurrection, as it is of death. The "tabernacle" shall be taken down; but, as the tabernacle of the Jews was succeeded by the temple which received the ark and the shekinah, so this tabernacle shall reappear, not as the temporary abode of the soul, but as the "temple of the Holy Ghost." Hence, the apostle tells us, not that the immortal part shall live on, but that "this mortal" shall "put on immortality;" not that the incorruptible part shall continue to live, but that "this corruptible must put on incorruption;"

not that death shall triumph forever over the mortal part that dies, but that "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." And, hence, also, all who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, "wait for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." The Psalmist anticipated this New Testament revelation, when he said, "My flesh also shall rest in hope."

"But," says the objector, "if the body shall rise again, with all its particles and properties and proportions and relations, will it not be the same body, under the same laws of life, with the same tendency to corruption?" This brings rather more into the subject than belongs to it. It is not essential to the identity of the body that its particles shall return with their properties and

proportions and relations. Nor is this the Scriptural idea, but the contrary of its plainest teachings. The body is not to come forth unchanged, but "changed,"—changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye; for the change thus predicated of the living that "shall not sleep" is equally affirmed of the dead that shall be raised up. And if the living shall be "changed," without losing their identity, so also shall the dead; and if the "change" wrought in the living takes away their mortality and corruptibility, without taking away their bodies, so also shall the dead, when raised up in honor and glory, possess their bodies, made spiritual and immortal. This is Paul's idea of the resurrection of the body. Every change essential to its spiritual relationships will be wrought in it. "Flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." Therefore, the refining process of the resurrection will take away every element of corruption, and all that which disqualifies flesh and blood for an inheritance in the heavenly kingdom. Be not disturbed, then, about any re-enthralment of

the soul through the resurrection of the body. That shall not occur. The spiritual body that shall come forth out of corruption and death will prove no detriment, but the joy and crown of the redeemed soul, re-clothed and glorified. Our bodies shall be "changed," but not exchanged for others than our own.

"But this is incomprehensible." Yes, it is a "mystery." Paul says, "Behold, I show you a mystery." The mode of its accomplishment surpasses our thought. So does the mode of creation. Our present being is incomprehensible. Mystery meets us on every side. The mystery of the resurrection is an incident of the fact, and furnishes no ground of objection to the fact itself. It is to be treated as we treat all other mysteries. We are to receive the fact on the testimony that sustains it, without concern about its mode. It is a hopeful sign when men recognize the fact that the resurrection of the dead is an event whose mode is not to be explained or comprehended.

The resurrection is a miracle. It belongs to no other class of facts than the supernat-

ural. Those who have gotten above or beyond the admission of the miraculous have no place for this doctrine, and no business with it. And being a miracle, it must be studied in the light of miracles. If it were a natural event, we should study it in the light of natural events. We should then want to see something about the laws, the forces, or the agents or causes, that were to bring it to pass. We should look after the obstructions or difficulties to be encountered, and scan all the conditions necessary to the production of the contemplated result, and summon to our aid all the light that philosophy and science could bring; but this is all out of place while studying a miracle. The resurrection does not result from natural laws or causes, and therefore the study of these will shed no light upon the question of its possibility or probability. In order to determine the possibility of its occurrence, we must study the supernatural powers and agencies on which miracles depend; and in deciding upon its probability we are to look at the moral ends proposed, and see whether he who only can accomplish the work has

given his word that he will do it. We are thus brought back to divine revelation for all light and all hope. It is a subject of revelation purely, an effect of divine power and wisdom, beyond the range of natural agencies.

So the Savior regarded it, and would have others regard it, when he rebuked the Sadducees for their unbelief, and their vicious methods of argumentation on the subject. They tried to carry the laws of earthly life, and the limitations of natural agencies, over into the sphere of the miraculous. In this they erred, as do modern objectors, who disbelieve the doctrine of the resurrection because they are unable to see its processes, or to comprehend the forces necessary to accomplish it. The Savior's reply to all such objectors was pertinent, and will never cease to be appropriate, so long as men strive to obstruct faith in the resurrection by alleging difficulties arising from their imperfect perception of natural laws. "Ye do therefore err, not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God." The resurrection depends on God's power. If he is able to raise the dead, that is enough. It is illogical to reason

on this subject, without taking God into the account. If he possesses power enough and wisdom enough and promises to do it, that ends controversy with Christians. We, therefore, close this chapter with the remark, that it is absolutely impossible for any one to frame an objection to the resurrection of the dead on natural or philosophical or scientific grounds, that does not imply a limitation of the power of God, and make that limitation material to its statement and its ultimate reliance.

CHAPTER XIII.

RESURRECTION AND JUDGMENT.

HAVING seen that the resurrection of the dead is connected with the coming of Christ, when he shall be revealed in the clouds with the angels, and when he shall cause the trump of God to sound, we now proceed to show that the final judgment will occur at the time of the same personal advent.

If the Scriptures reveal any thing clearly in regard to what shall be hereafter, it is the fact that the resurrection of the dead and the judgment of the world stand related in point of time. Those who discard the doctrine of a future general judgment, followed by eternal retributions, find themselves impelled to deny this proposition, in the interest of their system; and others, whose peculiar notions of the resurrection forbid the admission of a simultaneous rising at the coming of Christ,

reject the idea of a judgment in the resurrection, as antagonistic to their conceptions of the spirituality of the advent and the resurrection: but we are unable to avoid the conviction that all such have yielded to the influence of prepossessions to such an extent as to warp their judgments, and prevent the clearest testimony from having its legitimate effect in their minds.

Our first argument on this point is based on the Scriptural expression, "*the last day*."

The following Scriptures designate the period of the resurrection as the "*last day*": "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again *at the last day*. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up *at the last day*. . . . No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and I will raise him up *at the last day*. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up *at the last day*." (John vi,

39, 40, 44, 54.) To the same effect is the conversation between the Savior and Martha, the sister of Lazarus, who was then dead: "Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise in the resurrection *at the last day.*" (John xi, 23, 24.) The common belief among the Jews was that the dead should rise again at the last day. Martha expressed this sentiment, and whether she received it from the Jews as a part of her religious education, or from the previous teaching of Jesus Christ himself, she believed it true, and was not contradicted. Nor was it any figurative rising again of which she spoke. Lazarus was literally dead and buried, and she spoke of him, and of that resurrection which would terminate the reign of death over his mortal body. All thoughts of a moral or spiritual or figurative resurrection, were foreign to her mind on that mournful occasion. And Christ understood her perfectly, and spoke of the same kind of resurrection. He then, by calling Lazarus out of his grave, displayed his power over death, and encouraged the hope of a general resurrection at the last

day. This miracle, wrought under such circumstances, was a demonstration of his purpose to conquer death; and in the occurrences of that day not a word was said, nor an act performed, that was not calculated to strengthen the faith of the disciples, as expressed by Martha, that there shall be a resurrection "*at the last day.*"

Thus, in Paul's argument, as seen in another chapter, when Christ comes to raise the dead, it is said, "Then cometh the end." The period designated is the end of the mediatorial reign of Christ, and, therefore, the end of the dispensation of grace, the end of time. This last crowning act, which closes the history of the reign of Messiah as mediator and intercessor, and introduces the final period of retribution, is well distinguished as "*the last day.*" It is variously set forth in the Scriptures as "*the day,*" "*that day,*" "*the day of the Lord,*" "*the great and terrible day,*" "*the day of wrath,*" "*the day of judgment;*" but in no way is it more impressively described than in these repeated references to it as "*the last day.*"

And this same language is elsewhere used

by our Lord to indicate the time of the judgment. God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, when he will render to every man according to his deeds; and that appointed day of judgment is "the last day." "And if any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him *in the last day.*" (John xii, 47, 48.) If no other passages in the Bible connected the resurrection and the judgment, and fixed both events at the period of the winding up of human history on the earth, our Savior's use of this phrase, "the last day," is quite sufficient, and ought to command the faith of all that believe his words.

The significance of the word "day," in this oft-repeated phrase, is sometimes called in question, and its ambiguity is supposed to afford room for doubting the correctness of the application here made of the language. It is doubted whether the word "day"

should be taken in its ordinary sense as denoting the limited period of twenty-four hours. Possibly this doubt is well founded. We neither affirm nor deny any thing as to the length of the day. That is not the material point. The fact asserted is that it is "the last day." The day in question is at the end of a series of days; and that series, as a whole, makes up the duration of time, as measured by the earth's diurnal revolutions, so that the "last day," whether longer or shorter in fact, is beyond all the ordinary days of time. We speak, metaphorically, of "our day" and "our time" and of the "last time," as did the sacred writers; but, in the passages cited, where the resurrection and the judgment are mentioned, we trace no metaphorical use that would indicate its application to the Gospel day. Whether of longer or shorter duration, the language points to a definite period, fixed in the mind of God, when the present order of things shall cease—when time shall be no more, and when the Son of man shall come in glory, and raise the dead, and judge the world in righteousness.

This is all confirmed by the Apocalyptic

vision of the closing scene in Rev. xx, 11-15: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell (*hades*) delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." This scene follows events which unquestionably mark the closing up of the Gospel age, such as the binding of Satan, the thousand years' reign of the martyrs, the loosing of Satan, the battle of Gog and Magog, and the final overthrow of the enemies of God. The beginning of this period is an epoch of unspeakable interest to the Church,

when fierce opposition and bloody strife in the earth shall cease, and when Christian governments shall displace the idolatries and superstitions of the ages, and when Satanic powers shall be so restrained that the Gospel will find its way to the hearts of men, impeded only by such barriers as their native depravity presents; and yet, it is to be borne in mind, as previously shown, that no personal advent of our Lord is recognized as inaugurating this blessed era of the Church's triumph. The descent of an angel, with a key and a chain in his hand, to bind Satan and cast him into the bottomless pit, is noted; and surely, if the descent of the Son of God himself had then taken place, with all his saints and angels, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and with glory flashing from the east to the west, so that every eye should see him, such a transcendently glorious fact could not have been left out of the narration. That it is not mentioned is apparent, and this silence speaks volumes in opposition to any theory of the Advent that locates it this side of the day of judgment. But the coming of the Lord at

the end of this period is recognized. The "great white throne" appears. This is "the throne of his glory," mentioned in Matt. xxv, 31: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations." Hence, the appearance of the "great white throne," preparatory to the judgment, and subsequently to the "thousand years" of Satan's bondage, proves unmistakably that the coming of Christ synchronizes with the destruction of death and *hades* and the final judgment. We note specifically the order of events, as set forth in this vision: 1. The descent of the angel with the key of the bottomless pit; 2. The binding and imprisonment of Satan; 3. The reign of "the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus"—which is the triumph of the martyrs, distinguished above all other saints during this era of rest and peace; 4. The loosing of Satan and the last conflict upon earth; 5. The sudden appearance of the "great white throne," with the Judge of all the earth upon it; 6. The resurrection of the dead—"death and hell

delivered up the dead which were in them;" 7. The judgment—"And they were judged every man according to their works;" 8. The execution of the sentence, "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Here ends the scene.

Following this comes a scene which is not to be expected in this world during the reign of Christ as mediator; nor can it be during that wonderful era called the millennium. It belongs to the immortal state, beyond the coming of Christ—beyond the resurrection and the judgment, and beyond the passing away of the earth and heaven which are now. And it is to this period of triumph that many of the prophecies belong, which millenarians apply to the supposed reign of Christ on the earth before the final judgment. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the

tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." (Rev. xxi, 1-4.) This is, indeed, a new creation. Here the saints will enjoy perfect bliss; and in this final state shall be realized to its fullest measure the promise that "the meek shall inherit the earth." Prophetic vision sometimes caught glimpses of this ultimate renewal of the earth, and portrayed it as the product of redemption, the outcome of the mission of Christ; and to this consummation the prophecies and the promises look, and for it the whole of the Gospel dispensation is a preparation, while the highest attainments of the Church, in her militant state, can only foreshadow her glory in this new heaven and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Here there shall be nothing to hurt or to destroy in all God's holy mountain. Here shall be found the city of God. Here shall walk the

nations of them that are saved. This shall be one of the mansions in our Father's house. But God's children shall inherit all things. All heaven shall be theirs. Every world that floats in space shall minister to their comfort, and prove subservient to their pleasures, as they range the broad fields of the boundless universe. We must, therefore, wait till the curse is purged from the earth by the purifying fires of the day of the Lord's coming before the whole of prophetic forecast is fulfilled.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRIST'S COMING AT THE JUDGMENT.

THE next point to be insisted upon is the fact indirectly set forth in the preceding chapter, that the personal coming of Christ, with his angels, is at the time of the judgment, when every man shall be rewarded according to the deeds done in his body.

We have seen already, that his coming in glory is personal and visible; that it is for the purpose of raising the dead; that it is at the "end of the world;" and now, if it shall appear that it is also for the purpose of gathering the nations before his judgment seat, and officially announcing their destiny, we shall have reached a point where speculation and theorizing ought to cease, and where humble Christian faith should recognize the coming of Christ as the one grand event which is to terminate the history of this

world, reveal the final outcome of all human probation, and introduce the unchangeable realities of the world of retribution.

A preliminary fact ought to be settled before we proceed. It is, that rewards and punishments are to be distributed, according to the works of men, at the day of judgment, and at that time only. This is a fundamental fact. It underlies all right conceptions of probation and retribution, and stands out clearly in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." In Rom. ii, 5-16, the fact and time of the rewards are set forth, so as to show that retribution follows the day of judgment. In quoting, the parenthesis is omitted. "But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds—in the day

when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel." The day of rewards and punishments is the day of judgment. To the same point is the following: "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. xiv, 10-12.) Read this in connection with 2 Cor. v, 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." This brings out the whole proposition. When men appear before the judgment seat of Christ, and receive at the Lord's hands according to their deeds, that is the day of judgment, when we shall all give account of ourselves unto God. Then, if it shall turn out that this work of rewarding men according to their deeds takes place at Christ's Second Coming, with the angels,

when he descends to raise the dead, the point before us will be fully sustained; namely, that his coming is to judge the world, as well as to raise the dead.

In support of this proposition we refer to Matt. xvi, 27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." This coming with the angels is not a figurative coming, as has been shown; nor is it the spiritual coming in the kingdom, of which mention is made in the succeeding verse. It is a full, distinct, comprehensive statement of his personal coming in the glory of the Father, with the angels, and so complete that it requires no elucidation to show its bearing on the point in hand. It settles the fact beyond all controversy, that his personal coming is the time of retribution—the time of the judgment. There is but one period for appearing before the judgment seat of Christ, and but one object. It is to receive according to the deeds done in the body, which occurs once for all, and when it occurs, that is the day of judgment. The date is unrevealed, but

the fact is most unequivocally stated, that it will be at the Second Coming of Christ. "Then he shall reward every man according to his works."

We also cite Mark viii, 38: "Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels." The parallel passage is Luke ix, 26: "For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." The connection of these passages is the same as that in Matthew, where it is affirmed that "then he shall reward every man according to his works." The allusion is unquestionably to his personal coming, and to the judgment. To be "ashamed" of men, in his coming, is more than to feel an inward emotion with reference to them. It means a positive, open, judicial rejection of them. Thus we read in Matt. x, 32, 33: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men,

him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." And also in Luke xii, 8, 9: "Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God. But he that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God." This act of confessing men before the Father and before the angels of God is an act that belongs to the period of his coming in glory; and the act of denying those that denied him before men belongs to the same period, and is the same as that expressed above, when he says he will be "ashamed" of them "when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." It must be, therefore, that the day of his coming in glory with the angels is the day of judgment, when he "shall reward every man according to his works."

Passing over, in this place, the parables of the tares and wheat, and the net with the fishes, which confirm the view here

taken; and, also, the testimonies of the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew, which bear upon the subject—all of which are considered elsewhere—we turn to 1 Cor. iv, 3-5: "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified; but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God." The evidence this passage brings is somewhat indirect, yet not in the least ambiguous. The apostle reproves men for judging one another, and possibly alludes to criticisms which had been made upon his own conduct. He appeals from the judgments of men to the judgment of God, and incidentally mentions the coming of the Lord as the time of the final judgment, when all that is hidden shall be revealed, and every man shall have his just award. He himself could afford to wait

for the vindication which that day would surely bring, and he would have all Christian people do the same. Hence his appeal, "Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come." There can be no doubt that this language was written by the Apostle Paul under the full persuasion that the coming of the Lord was to be the day of judgment. It is impossible to understand his appeal on any other hypothesis. But not only does this appeal prove the point by clearly recognizing the coming of the Lord as "the time" of judgment, but the work attributed to the Lord, at his coming, is the appropriate and distinguishing work of the judgment-day. "Until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." This is pre-eminently the work of the Lord in the day of judgment. It is then that he will "bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." It is then that "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." It is then that "we must all appear before the judgment-

seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." It is then that "the books will be opened," and every one be "judged out of those things which are written in the books." It is then that "every one of us shall give account of himself to God." That is a day of revelation—a day of disclosure—a day of bringing to light the hidden things of darkness. No secrets shall evade the scrutiny of the judge; no counsels lurking in the hearts of men shall pass the day of the Lord's coming without being made manifest. How, then, is it possible to avoid the conclusion that when the Lord comes it is to judge the world in righteousness?

Our next appeal is to Paul's epistles to the Thessalonians. It is freely admitted that the proceedings of the day of judgment did not form the theme of these epistles, and, therefore, whatever light they shed upon the subject in hand, comes incidentally. It is, however, none the less clear when it comes, and none the less satisfactory because it comes as it does. We commence by read-

ing from 2 Thess. i, 3-10: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith growtheth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; so that we ourselves glory in you in the Churches of God, for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer: seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."

In this passage two things are apparent,

which, together, make out that the coming of Christ is the day of judgment. First, the unbelieving and disobedient shall then be punished; and, secondly, the punishment is that final award which follows the judgment. The first point is plainly affirmed, so as to admit of no denial. The last point, though not stated in so many words, is quite evident from the nature of the language employed, "Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints." There is no doubt that the punishment is connected with the coming of Christ, and, from the terms in which it is described, it must be final. It is no temporary infliction, no preparatory or premonitory judgment, to be renewed or repeated or reversed at a subsequent day. It is expressed in the strongest language that ever occurs with reference to the ultimate doom of the ungodly, and corresponds in this respect with the terms of the final sentence pronounced by the Son of man when he gathers the nations and separates them as a shepherd divideth the sheep

from the goats, and consigns the condemned to “everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.”

In the preceding epistle this same coming of the Lord is connected with the resurrection of the dead, as we have seen in another chapter. We turn to it here to show that in that epistle, and in the immediate connection where the resurrection is described, the retribution of the ungodly is recognized as occurring at the same time, and in language that properly denotes the day of judgment, and is positively and uniformly applied to that day. Let us read the paragraph as written, without regard to the division of the chapter: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the

day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief." (1 Thess. iv, 16, to v, 4.) Here the descent of the Lord from heaven, to raise the dead, is called "the day of the Lord," and it is affirmed that "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." And the Thessalonians knew this so perfectly that it was not needful that the apostle should tell them any thing concerning the time of the advent. They knew, as well as he, that the time was not revealed, but purposely left in all uncertainty, the times and the seasons being left in the Father's own power. They must have learned this from some one who had told them the words of the Lord himself, which he so frequently used in the presence of the disciples. "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." "For ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." "But of that day and hour know-

eth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." This, then, is "the day of the Lord that so cometh as a thief in the night," the day that "overtakes" the unwatchful as a thief. It brings not only surprise, but "destruction." It is "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men," and they that are unready "shall not escape." It is the same day of which Peter says, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up." It will be observed that in this Peter used the same words that Paul did in regard to "the day of the Lord." They both had in mind the same day, and Paul alludes to the "destruction" it will bring upon the ungodly, and Peter expressly calls it "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Where, then, is there room for doubt that the unrevealed day of the Lord's second coming is the day of judgment? It is certainly the day of the resurrection of the dead, and no less clearly is it now shown to be the

day of final retribution. Thus inseparably are the great events of "the last day" linked together. The coming of Christ and the resurrection are joined together; the coming of Christ and the judgment are joined together, and, as another chapter shows, the resurrection and the judgment are joined together. Then, "what God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

This showing is met by the assumption that the coming of Christ, treated of in these epistles, was not a personal, but a "figurative," advent—that same "figurative" advent supposed to relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, which we have so fully considered and refuted. But we must look at it again in this connection, or be thought neglectful of something which our "liberalistic" friends regard as highly important.

First of all, our attention is called to the fact that the Jews were somewhat numerous in Thessalonica, and that they had a synagogue there, and were full of zeal for the maintenance of their own worship. (Acts xvii, 1-13.) This is to assure us that the Jews, who were the persecutors of the disci-

plies at Thessalonica, would be interested in the judgments that might befall their brethren in Jerusalem. But, suppose this to be so, since the Lord made no promise to come again at that time, but warned his disciples not to be deceived by the appearance of false Christs, on what ground the Thessalonian Christians could be expected to interpret the language Paul addressed to them concerning the coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the retribution of the wicked in the day of the Lord, as relating to a figurative coming at the destruction of Jerusalem, is something which ordinary minds can neither see nor comprehend. The truth is, that figurative coming, which has figured so largely in modern expositions, is simply a figment of the fancy, without foundation in the Scriptures, and without use or meaning in exegesis.

It is probably true that some gathered the impression from Paul's first epistle, in which he spoke of "the day of the Lord" coming "as a thief in the night," that they ought to expect the coming of Christ very soon—to regard it as "imminent"—and needed further admonition on that point. If such was the

case, it is evident that they did not confound "the day of the Lord" with the national disaster that awaited the Jews. There is absolutely nothing to warrant any supposition to that effect. But whatever their thought in regard to the nature of the advent—and it is pretty certain that they began to cherish the idea of a speedy personal coming to raise the dead and punish the wicked—the apostle did not rebuke their error on that point, but only in regard to the "imminence" of the event. There was, doubtless, reason for his solicitude in relation to this matter, as the earnestness of his exhortation shows too much feeling to have arisen without the perception of danger to his brethren. His language is, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposeth and ex-

alteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." We are not concerned, just now, about the identification of the "man of sin," but remark, in passing, that there are some characteristics here which fit the Papal power better than any personage or thing that has ever appeared on the earth. The titles which are given to the chief Pontiff in Rome, as "our Lord God, the Pope;" the prerogatives and powers he claims, as the vicar of Christ ; the homage he receives, in the bended knees and prostrate forms of the multitudes that do him reverence ; and the place he occupies on solemn occasions in the "temple of God," so called, all point to him as the only one on earth who "exalteth himself above all that is called God or is worshiped," and who claims to exercise divine authority in the Church.

But the fact most important, in this connection, is the apostasy or "falling away" predicted. It was, evidently, a great departure from the simplicity of the Gospel, whose origin could be traced to elements already at

work in the Church, and whose results were to reach onward through the centuries to the revelation of Christ. It was also to be closely related to the coming of the lawless one, the man of sin, whose coming was "after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." This apostasy, if we can at all depend on the facts revealed in the unimpeachable history of the Church, began in the days of the post-apostolic fathers, and reached its full development in the fifth century, when worldliness and fanaticism combined almost destroyed the spirituality of the Church, and the pope aspired to universal sovereignty. If this is correct—and who can successfully controvert it?—then it is impossible to believe that the coming of Christ, about which we read in these epistles, was a figurative coming to destroy Jerusalem. And whether our interpretation of the "apostasy" be correct or not, it is evident that the "falling away" did not take place in time to allow the revelation of the "man of sin" to antedate the downfall of Jerusalem. That event took place A. D. 70, about forty years after the ascension of Christ, and not to ex-

ceed sixteen years after the date of this epistle. It can not be that the apostle wrote this earnest entreaty to the Thessalonians not to be shaken in mind, as though the day of Christ was near at hand, if it was within sixteen years of its consummation, and the date being unknown, it might happen even sooner than that! And then there was something in the apostle's mind, connected with the coming of Christ, which he called "our gathering together unto him." But there was no "gathering together unto him" when Jerusalem was destroyed, and there was to be none; for the disciples were instructed not to gather together at that time, but to "flee to the mountains."

Thus it appears, in every aspect of the case, that this fancied "figurative" advent fails its supporters, and leaves their theories of retribution, which depend upon it, without the semblance of a foundation.

CHAPTER XV.

JUDGMENT AFTER DEATH.

WITH the proposition so fully established that the Second Coming of Christ is a coming to judgment, when he will render to every one according to his works, we now direct attention to the fact that this general judgment relates not only to those who may be living when the Judge descends, but to the dead as well.

This is a link in the chain of argument not to be omitted, because it bears upon the "liberalistic" theories of judgment and future retribution, and also upon the doctrine of the Second Advent, and the resurrection of the dead.

When Christ comes he will find two classes interested in his proceedings; namely, those who are "alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord," and those who will have died.

These two classes are mentioned as the "quick and dead." Those who have not died, but are found living, and, consequently, when clothed with immortality, are "changed" without the double processes of death and resurrection, are called the "quick." The original term means "living." The other class are called "the dead," although they cease to be "dead" by coming to life again, in the resurrection. These two classes comprise the entire race of mankind, and they are the subjects of the judgment at the appearing of Jesus Christ. Hence we read, Acts x, 42: "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." And in 2 Tim. iv, 1: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." And, also, 1 Peter iv, 4, 5: "Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking of you, who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead." These Scriptures cover the whole ground.

They show that the Lord Jesus Christ is to exercise the office of judge; that all classes, the living and the dead, are to be judged; that they are to "give account to him;" and that this judgment is to occur "at his appearing and his kingdom." This fixes the judgment, beyond question, at the second coming. As Judge he will come in glory, and sit upon his throne as King, and render unto all according to their deeds. His kingdom is then complete, and its final revelation is made in this judicial display of his righteousness. It seems impossible that language should be more explicit in connecting the judgment of the living and the dead with his personal and glorious coming. The fact that this presentation of the subject antagonizes the liberalist's theory of progressive judgment and the premillennial hypothesis of the Second Advent is not to be considered a moment as a reason for hesitancy in accepting the imperative requirement of these inspired testimonies.

We now turn to other Scriptures, which show with equal distinctness, that both the living and the dead are the subjects of the

judgment. Read again Rom. xiv, 8-12: "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Here are two classes, "the living and the dead" as in the former Scriptures. Christ has become by his death and resurrection Lord or King or Judge of both the "dead and living." This takes in all the race, the righteous and the unrighteous. And the assertion is, that "we shall *all* stand before the judgment seat of Christ." The necessary antecedent of the "all" in this passage is the phrase, "dead and living," just above. With this construction, the sense is, "We shall all, both dead and living, stand before the judgment seat of

Christ." The word "all" being a universal term, unless restricted by its connection, would include every possible class and condition; but here it is not restricted, and its application to the two classes which make up the whole is marked and emphasized. We are therefore bound to take it in its broadest sense.

And this view is strengthened by the quotation which the apostle introduces with the words, "For it is written." The passage from which he quotes is written in Isa. xlv, 23, 24: "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come, and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." This teaches a universal subjugation to Christ, as the outcome of his administration as Redeemer and King. Universalists quote the passage to prove a universal salvation; but the apostle quotes it to prove a universal accountability and judgment. While "all" are gathered before his

judgment seat, and every knee bows to him in his kingly authority, and every tongue owns him Lord and Conqueror, his enemies, those that were "incensed against him," will find no delight in his triumph, but will be filled with "shame." Paul's is the right conclusion when he says, "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." This is what is indicated by the "Universalism" of the prophet and the apostle, and it is the only true application of these instructive Scriptures.

Of precisely the same import is the following, 2 Cor. v, 10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." In the connection, the apostle describes two conditions, that of the living and of the dead. To be "absent from the body and present with the Lord," represents the condition of the dead; while to be "at home in the body and absent from the Lord," is the state of the living. Then the two words, "present" and "absent," denote the living and the dead. These include all,

and give the true application of the word "all" in the verse before us. The apostle says, "Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all"—whether present or absent, that is, whether living or dead—"appear before the judgment seat of Christ." The connective "for" binds the passages together, and determines the scope and meaning of the "all," as well as the pronoun "we." The fact comes out unmistakably that both the dead and the living must appear before the judgment seat; and, although the coming of Christ is not mentioned as the time of the judgment, it is evidently implied, as that is the time when the living and the dead meet together, and the thought is necessary to bring the passage into harmony with other Scriptures which so positively declare that he will judge the living and the dead at his appearing.

The passage we next select as teaching a general judgment, after death, and implying that it is to occur at the coming of Christ, is one which has given great trouble to Universalists and others who accept the Scriptures,

and yet deny the future judgment, with its eternal issues. The importance attached to it, and the use that has been made of it will justify, or rather require, more than a passing notice of its leading points. We refer to Heb. ix, 27, 28: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Three things are positive; namely, death, judgment, and the second coming of Christ. As surely as men die and go to judgment, so surely Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and will come the second time. Will he come to judgment? So other passages affirm, and this one implies.

But the reader will desire to see how "liberalists" explain these words, so as to obviate the doctrine of a judgment after death, and we present them the standard exposition. The words we quote are but the echo of voices that went before, while those who follow continue the same strain. It is generally accepted as the best that can be given in

that interest, and its correctness as a representative interpretation will not be questioned.

It runs thus:

"The apostle is here contrasting the legal dispensation and the priesthood of Aaron, with its rites and ceremonies and offices, with the Christian dispensation and priesthood of Christ. Hence he has no reference to the future state at all. And the death here spoken of has no reference to a natural death. But it has reference to the death which the priest under the law figuratively died in the sacrifice or atonement which he made for the people. It was customary for the priest, once a year, to enter into the holy of holies to make atonement for the whole house of Israel. And when he entered this place he bore on his breast the breastplate of judgment, which had inscribed in it the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. On the border of his garment were little bells. After he had made the atonement and the sacrifice was accepted, then came the decision or judgment. To make known to the people that the atonement was made, and the sacrifice accepted, and the high-priest yet lived, he

gave a sound with the bells on the border of his garment, and, on hearing it, the whole camp of Israel gave a shout of joy. Now this atonement was a type of the general atonement, which was made by Jesus Christ for the sins of the whole world. So says the apostle here: 'And as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment.' As it is appointed unto men once to die under the figure of sacrifice, referring to the atonement made by the high-priest, and after this the decision, so Christ was once offered for the sins of the whole world, and thus, as it was with the high-priest, it shall be announced that the sacrifice is accepted, the atonement made for the sins of the whole world, and Jesus Christ the High-priest still lives to make intercession for us."

Here is a strange mingling of type and antitype, of things that are compared and things that are contrasted. But we look only at the substance. There are in this statement three assumptions which, if they be not sustained, will stand as confessions that the language of the apostle is out of harmony with any system that denies judgment after

death. They are, 1. That the death mentioned is "not a natural death;" 2. That it is the figurative death of the high-priest in the sacrifice or atonement; 3. That the "judgment" means the "decision" made with reference to the sacrifice.

If the first assumption be true, it will follow that the apostle meant the high-priest alone when he said "men," and this is the understanding of those who adopt this exposition, as may be seen by the next assumption; and, we may add, that the only serious attempt to support this interpretation is found in the critical labor put forth to restrict the word "men" to "priest." Learned disquisitions have been written to this end, the substance of which is, that, in the original, the article precedes the noun, and, if translated, the expression, "the men," would occur, which would indicate a class, meaning the priests. The criticism is too puerile to spend a thought upon, were it not that it is made the basis of a grave interpretation, which becomes a turning-point with many, in the discussion of a doctrine of unspeakable importance. No reason can be given why the

apostle should here use the general expression, *tois anthropois*, if he meant only the high-priest, who officiated in the holy of holies. He could have said priest just as easily, and doubtless would have done so, if he had meant the priest. But our learned critics, who see so much force in the article, and see nothing in "men" but priests, overlook the plural form of the word, and forget that but one high-priest officiated in the service in question. Besides, there is no authority for the claim that the article limits the word "men" to a particular class. The article is translated or not, just as the English idiom requires. The translator ascertains the thought in the original, and expresses it in good language, rendering all the connectives and particles necessary to the sense, and nothing more. This is done in the present instance, and well done, so that the pretense that the translation is imperfect is the sheerest assumption. The word rendered "die" expresses the dissolution of the body, the extinction of life, the act of becoming putrescent; and the word rendered "appointed" denotes a judicial appointment or sentence, while the word

"once" fixes the thought upon the common notion of a death which can not be repeated.

The second assumption is contrary to the facts in the case. It is not true that the high-priest figuratively died in the sacrifice he offered. In approaching into the presence of God, in the holy of holies, he was liable to lose his life, literally, through impropriety of conduct or defect in his services, and on that account the sign was given by the bells on the border of his garment, that the people might know that the offering was accepted and he still lived; but in no part of the service did he figuratively die for the people. The victim which he offered in sacrifice died literally, and that typified Christ's death, and took place outside of the holy of holies; but there was no dying for the people to be accomplished within the second veil. That place was the type of heaven, into which Christ hath entered for us, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us, and where he is to remain till the time appointed to render the decisions of the judgment-day. If our critics really desired to be scrupulously exact in rendering this typical service in its relation

to the great high-priest, they should have added to their definition of the judgment as the decision pronounced by the high-priest upon his return from the holy of holies, that Jesus Christ will also return from heaven itself, and that his return will likewise be an hour for decision or judgment.

But, even if it were possible to regard the service of the high-priest in the holy of holies as a figurative death, it would be untrue to assert that it was appointed to take place but "once." This whole service was performed, not only more than "once" during the Aaronic priesthood, but more than "once" within the official term of a single priest. It took place "once every year." It was the very service which differed from the priestly work of Christ, and was inferior to it in this respect, as much as in others, that it must be repeated year after year continually.

The death of Christ was *contrasted* with the offerings of the high-priests under the law, in that he suffered "once," while they offered their sacrifices "often." But his death, or offering for sin, which was once for all, never to be repeated, is not contrasted with that

death which is "appointed unto men," in the Scripture before us, but *compared* with it in this particular, that it occurs but "once." As men die *once*, so he suffered *once*. This is the emphatic point in the argument. "Nor yet that he should offer himself *often*, as the high-priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he *often* have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now *once* in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men *once* to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many." Thus it appears that Christ's death was *not* "as the high-priest entered into the holy place and died figuratively," for that was "*often*;" but it was as men die—*once*, and only once. It seems impossible to imagine a plainer contradiction than exists between the apostle's argument in this connection and the "*exposition*," which is made a chief corner-stone in the fabric of Universalism.

In regard to the third assumption mentioned, we need only remark that if the word

"judgment" means "decision"—and in every act of judgment there is a decision implied—it is a decision which is to be announced after death, according to our works; a decision the high priest of our profession shall render after his intercession is over, when he comes back from the holy place, or when he "appears the second time without sin unto salvation." It is a decision that shall be final, fixing human destiny judicially, as human conduct will have fixed it morally before that day. But, that it relates to the acceptance of the sacrifice of Christ, except it be as to the actual result of that sacrifice in the salvation of those who avail themselves of it, is unsupported by any evidence, and is positively untrue. The resurrection of Christ proved the acceptance of his offering, and that before he ascended to the holy place not made with hands. It is the word which is generally rendered "judgment," and in this place points to an appointed day of revelation and decision after death, too plainly to be misunderstood. And if it be true that this passage relates to literal death and to the judgment beyond, it simply falls into line with the uniform teaching of

the Scriptures, and recognizes the fact that Jesus Christ is "ordained of God to be the judge of the quick and dead."

Several other Scriptures which teach a judgment after death, and closely related to the second coming of Christ, must be dismissed with a hasty glance. Several passages speak of those long dead as appearing in judgment. "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." (Matt. xi, 20-24.) This can not mean that

it will be less "tolerable for Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum in the days of their calamity than it was for Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom" in the days of their overthrow. The language points to a future "day of judgment," in which all shall be dealt with; and it shall then be more tolerable for the inhabitants of these cities than for those who have enjoyed superior advantages. There is no way of meeting the force of the words without the idea of a future, general judgment, when all past generations, however long dead, shall "appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." This also accords with the following: "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city." (Matt. x, 14, 15.) And the same view of the coming judgment is necessary to explain the following: "The men of Nineveh shall rise in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater

than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here." (Matt. xii, 41, 42.) These Scriptures point distinctly to a future judgment-day, when those of past generations "shall rise up in the judgment." No criticism has ever broken the force of this language, and we have no apprehension that it ever will be broken.

To the same effect is the argument of the Apostle Peter, as follows: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell (*Tartarus*) and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and, turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly; and delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:

(for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;) the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." (2 Peter ii, 4-9.) In this we must note that "the angels that sinned" are not finally judged, but they are in *tartarus*, "reserved unto judgment." So, also, with the ungodly of the old world and of the demolished cities. They are "reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished." What the Lord has done with these and with Noah and Lot proves that he "knows how" to deliver the godly, and to reserve or keep in custody the unjust unto the day of judgment. The word "reserved" is used with reference to the angels that are in *tartarus*, and with reference to the ungodly dead of past generations, and, in the next chapter, with reference to the "heavens and earth which are now kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." These are all "*reserved unto judgment*"— "*reserved unto the day of judgment*;" "*re-*

served unto fire against the day of judgment." The judgment is undoubtedly the same, and it is yet future as certainly as that the world is not yet burned up. Nothing but the future general judgment at "the day of the Lord," when he "shall come as a thief in the night," will meet the conditions of this argument, or account for the terms employed. Of these same characters the Apostle Jude speaks, when he tells us that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly," etc. Evidently, Jude believed in the future judgment, as Peter did, and that it will take place when "the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints."

An important testimony, which we can barely mention, is Rev. xi, 18: "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which

destroy the earth." When was this? It was, as the connection shows, a scene laid under the sounding of the seventh angel, which is the "last trumpet." It was at an epoch in the world's history, which can not be easily misunderstood; for it was when "there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." It was at the close of the mediatorial reign, when all the concurrent voices of the Scripture proclaim the end of time and the coming of the Lord Jesus, to raise the dead and judge the world in righteousness. This recognition of the judgment under the seventh trumpet is clear and positive; and yet the vision was suspended till another series was introduced, which ran over the Gospel age from the beginning to the end, when the same judgment scene was again brought out with greater fullness, in connection with the appearance of "the great white throne," which synchronizes with the coming of Christ, when he shall "sit upon the throne of his glory." This fuller picture of the judgment, in the resurrection of the dead, is in

Rev. xx, 11-15: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great; stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." But, having elsewhere noted the bearing of this Scripture on the doctrine of the advent and the judgment, it is only important to remind the reader that the picture of the judgment in these two places is the same; and that the righteous, as well as the wicked, are to be the subjects of it. This is implied in the opening of the "book of life," and even more positively set forth in

the first passage, where it is said so plainly, "And the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward *unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great.*" This effectually disposes of the premillennialist assumption that all the righteous will have been rewarded, and that only the wicked will appear in the judgment at the great day. Each passage seems to be a two-edged sword, cleaving asunder the two opposite doctrines necessarily antagonized in this argument. Neither those who deny all judgment at the end of time, nor those who hold that the "prophets" and "saints" and them that fear God, "small and great," shall have been raised and rewarded, and reigned on the earth with Christ a thousand years before the time of the judgment, can find any particle of support in these Scriptures, or any ground to place a foot upon. The testimony is overwhelming in favor of a future, general resurrection, and a judgment of universal humanity.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CONFLAGRATION.

THE coming of Christ and the "day of the Lord" are identical in point of time. This fact requires that we study the Apostle Peter's description of the "day of the Lord" in this connection.

As we have already seen that the coming of Christ and the day of judgment are connected, so here we find that "the day of the Lord," which "cometh as a thief in the night," is the "day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." There is, perhaps, no doctrine more dreaded by men of "liberal" tendencies in religious thought than that there shall be a general judgment at the end of time, when all the human race shall be assembled and rewarded according to the deeds done in the body. It is too serious a subject to be treated lightly; yet multitudes, upon

the slightest examination of the theories of Unitarians and Universalists, hasten to pronounce the orthodox teaching exploded.

In this chapter we invite attention to an argument that ought to be decisive, and we put it forth, believing that when it is developed it will carry conviction to every unbiased mind, leading directly to the belief in the future judgment, with all its momentous realities. This argument is found in the fact that in "the day of the Lord," which is the day of judgment, *this world is to be burned up*. If this be a fact, there is no possibility that the day of judgment is past, or even now in progress. It must, in the nature of things, be at "the last day"—at the end of the age—as the Savior so distinctly declared it would be.

The burning up of this world, if it be literally understood, can not take place till the close of time, and, if we find it connected with the judgment as one of the incidents of the day of the Lord, it will follow that the judgment is subsequent to the Gospel day. The Scriptures teach that when the Gospel dispensation closes, and the Lord descends from heaven and calls the dead from their

graves, the visible earth and heaven shall be destroyed by fire, and afterward be renewed in righteousness. We accept this statement as pointing to a literal fact, and propose to test it in the light of the criticisms and objections offered by the opposers of the doctrine of a literal advent and future judgment. Without transcribing the passage, we rely upon 2 Peter iii, 1-14.

We freely concede that if this passage does not point to a literal conflagration, there is nothing in the Bible that does. On the other hand, we claim that if this teaches such a conflagration, there are many other Scriptures which allude to it, and imply what this clearly expresses.

All who deny a future judgment find it necessary to deny the literal sense of this Scripture, and resort to a figurative interpretation in order to dispose of it, applying the whole chapter to the destruction of Jerusalem and the passing away of the Jewish polity and dispensation. In support of this interpretation appeal is made to the prophecies of the Old Testament, wherein revolutions of States are described in language similar to that em-

ployed by Peter in this chapter. We notice the principal passages of this class, the ones relied upon to sustain the figurative interpretation.

Among the most prominent is Isaiah xxxiv, 4: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree." It is true that this language bears some resemblance to that of Peter, although its figurative character is much more apparent, and the application of it much more positively demands that it be so understood. Nor is it by any means clear that the prophet did not ultimately allude to the scenes of the last day—the very events which formed the topic of discourse with the apostle. Many of the prophecies have a twofold meaning or a literal and a figurative application. Here the first application is to God's judgments upon Idumea; but the imagery is borrowed from the breaking up of the order of the visible creation, the very catastrophe that Peter minutely describes; and if the application of the language to the

final dissolution be objected to on the ground that it is impossible that the heavens be literally "rolled together as a scroll," the answer is, that this is a figurative representation of the ease with which the Almighty will accomplish his purpose when the time arrives for cutting asunder the tie that so mysteriously holds together the mighty fabric. The context indicates that this visitation from the Lord upon the land of Idumea was but a type of the day of vengeance, when all nations will be interested in the judgments revealed.

Another passage of this class, to which reference is sometimes made, is Ezekiel xxxii, 1: "And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light." But this language has nothing like the force of that which Peter employs. It is figurative and impressive in its application, but not nearly so vigorous as that just considered from Isaiah. To "cover the sun with a cloud" is nothing uncommon, and the same means will hide the light of the moon and the stars. The imagery

is taken from a dismal day and night when the clouds prevail. In this language Ezekiel described the overthrow of the Egyptian king and the desolation of the country by a powerful enemy. The picture falls infinitely short in comparison with Peter's sublime description of the "day of the Lord."

Our attention is likewise called to Joel ii, 10: "The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining." The topic is the utter desolation of the land of Israel. The allusion is to a frightful storm, when the thunder shakes the earth and heaven, and the gathering clouds bring darkness; but the imagery falls below the idea presented by Peter. There is nothing here like the melting of the elements with fervent heat and the burning up of the earth.

The following is quoted with great confidence, and deserves special attention: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men

shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." (Joel ii, 28-30.) The Apostle Peter quoted this on the day of Pentecost, to show that the outpouring of the Spirit predicted was then fulfilled; but he did not assert or intimate that every thing in the prophecy was so fulfilled as to restrict its application to the events of that day. The manifestation of the Spirit marked the beginning of the Gospel age, and characterizes the whole period of the Christian dispensation so that this prophecy applies to the day in which we live, as well as to the day of Pentecost; then, why may not the latter part of the passage, which gives the signs of the coming of "the great and terrible day of the Lord," relate to the signs of the termination of the dispensation of the Spirit? This joining of the beginning and ending of the dispensation in a single passage is not contrary to the usage

of the prophets, nor without illustration in the discourses of our Lord himself. As we have seen, he speaks of his coming "in the glory of the Father with the holy angels," and then immediately, as if with the next breath, he mentions his coming "in his kingdom"—events which are separated by the whole period of the Gospel dispensation. There is no reason why we may not apply this prediction of the outpouring of the Spirit to the whole of the dispensation which it distinguishes, while there are substantial reasons for so applying it; and, if we do so apply it, we are shut up to the necessity of understanding the "wonders in the heavens and in the earth," as relating to something that shall mark the winding up of the Gospel period and the approach of the "great and terrible day of the Lord"—the very day which is elsewhere called "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

Some think that Peter regarded the whole prophecy as fulfilled when he quoted it; but this can not be maintained. He asserted nothing of the kind. He did not affirm that God had already shown wonders in the

heavens and the earth, "blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke." He did not claim that the sun had already been "turned into darkness and the moon into blood." Nor did he represent the day of Pentecost as "the great and terrible day of the Lord." He only assured the people that so much of the prophecy as related to the gift of the Spirit was fulfilled, without making any application of the other parts of it. Nor do the opposers of the future judgment themselves believe that all these "wonders" had appeared at that time; much less do they suppose that Peter, in his epistle, meant the day of Pentecost, when he spoke of the "day of the Lord." On the contrary, they regard this part of the prophecy, as also the language of Peter, as descriptive of the destruction of Jerusalem forty years after the end of the Jewish dispensation and the opening of the Gospel era. Moreover, these "wonders" are not characteristic of "the great and terrible day of the Lord," but, according to the prophecy, they must precede the coming of that day. These signs and wonders are to herald its approach. Hence, if it were conceded that

Joel described only the beginning of the Gospel dispensation and the destruction of Jerusalem, this would be no proof that Peter, in his epistle, spoke of the same thing ; for Joel spoke of what should take place "*before* the great and terrible day of the Lord come," while Peter, in the chapter in question, speaks of "*the day of the Lord*" itself and of the results of its coming.

But, in addition to all this, we wish to mark the difference between the language of the Old Testament prophecies and that of the Apostle Peter, still more specifically. And let it be borne in mind that in not one of the passages cited from the Old Testament is the complete destruction of the world spoken of or the agency of fire alluded to. They mention the obscuring of the light of the sun and moon, the falling down of the stars, and the rolling together of the heavens, but always in such a way as to leave no doubt in the mind of the reader as to the figurative character of the language employed. But Peter says nothing of the obscuring of the light, nor does he mention the rolling together of the heavens or the falling of the stars, but speaks plainly

of the burning up of the earth and the works therein, and specifies the agent that shall accomplish this result. His description is too elaborate and too full of particulars to be taken as a rhetorical flourish. There is also an absurdity in taking the language of the Old Testament literally, because there is no possibility of the things mentioned being done literally. The heavens can not be rolled together as a scroll. But in the literal interpretation of the apostle's language there is no such absurdity involved. Every thing mentioned by him may be done literally, and not a single philosophical difficulty be encountered. The burning up of the earth, the passing away of the atmospheric heavens with a great noise, and the melting of the elements with fervent heat, are all things possible, and may be done literally: and, if done, the phenomena attending the scene, as suggested by the apostle, correspond in every particular with what the highest authorities in science will affirm to be the necessary accompaniments of the conflagration. Science can not deny the possibility of a single item in the apostolic representation, and learned men

have often been impressed, upon purely scientific grounds, that preparation for some such event is manifest in every department of physical nature. Earth, air, and sea are full of the materials for such a consummation, so that the slightest readjustment of the electrical forces, or disturbance of the component properties of the elements, will prove sufficient to unchain the fire that lurks in readiness for the coming day. Then, if the prophets did sometimes allude to the last day, and borrow imagery therefrom, to give impressive expression to the calamities about to fall upon the countries of which they prophesied, this fact ought to raise a presumption that later inspirations would unfold more fully the scene so darkly shadowed to them and so imperfectly understood; and, instead of their figurative language being a reason for restricting the apostle's utterances to the significance of what they said, the reasons are strong for looking beyond all local applications of their prophecies to the final source of their boldest imagery, for the import of that which he so plainly affirmed belonged to "the day of the Lord." Their language must be interpreted

figuratively in any application made of it; but, since Peter's language is later than theirs, and less rhetorical, and so strictly accurate as to encounter no absurdity, contradiction, or philosophical or scientific difficulty in its literal interpretation, there is no necessity for resorting to figurative interpretations or far-fetched and forced applications in order to explain it. There is, indeed, no reason, either in the nature of his language or in the nature of the event described, for giving to his words any other than their plainest and most literal meaning.

But we shall not stop here. There are positive reasons found in the language in question why we dare not apply the apostle's description of "the day of the Lord" as a figurative description of the calamities coming on the Jewish nation—reasons that can not be overcome by sober criticism, much less pushed aside by confident assertion.

I. The apostle urged the coming of the day of God and the dissolution contemplated as a motive to piety and diligence on the part of all to whom he wrote, intimating that they would be personally interested in the pro-

ceedings of that day. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." But this epistle was not written to Jews alone, nor to Christians dwelling in Judea only, but to the Churches in general, and was addressed to "strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." If the apostle wrote these things only of the destruction of Jerusalem or the subversion of the Jewish polity, such an appeal to "strangers" scattered throughout all those countries seems unaccountable, and we hazard nothing in pronouncing it inappropriate, if not preposterous.

2. The coming of "the day of the Lord," here mentioned, was to be a very sudden and unexpected event—"as a thief in the night." In this respect it corresponds with what Christ so often said of his second coming. The words were evidently borrowed from his discourses, and applied by Peter to what he understood to be the same event. The coming of the day of the Lord, and the coming of the Lord himself, are identical as to time,

so that the one means the other, or implies it. But the overthrow of the Jewish nation and the destruction of Jerusalem were neither sudden events nor unanticipated. The great storm of wrath which brought such disaster did not burst upon them unexpectedly. It had been foretold by the Lord and the apostles, and was indicated by the dissensions and tumults with which the Jews were exhausting their strength, while the hostile attitude and preparation of their enemies foreshadowed the result. All their surroundings pointed to the fall of the city as inevitable. And, after the war began, so far from its horrors coming suddenly, "like a thief in the night," the conflict was protracted from month to month, until by war, famine, pestilence, and faction the obstinate Jews were reduced to desperation, and finally brought under the power of the Romans, and subjected to their dreaded doom.

3. The apostle's refutation of the "scoffers" mentioned proves that he had a literal conflagration in mind. These "scoffers" assumed that Christ had promised to come speedily, and destroy the earth and

punish the disobedient, and they thought that delay proved his promise false. Finding nothing like an interruption of the course of nature, which they understood to be connected with the promised advent, they derisively asked, "Where is the promise of his coming? for, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." They denied the truthfulness of the "promise," because the world was not destroyed, showing that it was the popular belief that the destruction of the world was connected with the coming again. If Peter had understood the matter as do our modern "figurative" interpreters, who deny the future advent and judgment, and discard the literal burning of the earth, he would have answered these "scoffers" in quite a different strain. He would have explained to them their mistake, showing them that Christ's promised coming had nothing to do with the destruction of the world; that the established order of the creation was not to be interrupted; that the "end of the world" did not mean what they supposed it did, but only the closing up of the Jewish dispensation; and that

the subversion of the order of things connected with it should be interpreted as a "figurative" setting forth of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army! But he did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he vindicated the "promise" which these "scorners" assailed, on the ground of the "long suffering of the Lord," in the first place, and then on the ground that time with the Lord is not as it is with us—"For one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." The entire scope of his argument shows that the apostle never intended to correct the prevailing impression that the coming of Christ, the day of judgment, and the destruction of the world were all connected in point of time. He pointed to the destruction of the old world by water, charging the false teachers with being "willingly ignorant" of that literal fact, and made it a proof and an example of the destruction of the same world by fire at the "day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." The allusion to the flood would have been inappropriate, if he intended to teach any thing other than a literal destruction of the world by fire.

Some have thought that the apostle had modern Universalists in mind when he described the "scoffers" who denied the Second Coming of Christ. It is true that the false teachers intended, were not those of his day, but some that should "come in the last days," and in this respect the language might fit any who, at the present time, deny the Coming of Christ, the day of judgment, and the destruction of the world; but there are evidently some particulars in which these "scoffers" differed from Universalists. They denied the Second Coming of Christ to judgment very much as Universalists and other "liberalists" do, but they had no figurative method of interpreting the promise to come again, so far as we can see; and then they did, as Universalists do not, connect the coming to judgment with the destruction of the world. For this they were not reproved; but, while they understood the nature of the promise, and saw what it contemplated, they denied its truthfulness, because they saw the course of nature uninterrupted. Universalists, like these "scoffers," do contemptuously inquire, "Where is the promise of his com-

ing?" and, although they base their skepticism on different grounds, it can not be questioned that their vehement opposition to the literal teaching of this chapter, allies them very closely, in spirit at least, with those whom the apostle describes as "scoffers."

4. The apostle's comparison between the former destruction of the world by water, and its future destruction by fire, proves that one event is as literal as the other. It is a literal fact that the old world perished by water; it is a literal fact that the heavens and earth which are now, are kept in store or treasured up so as not to be destroyed by another deluge; and it is a literal fact, if there is any established meaning in language, that this same world, which is kept "standing out of the water and in the water," is "reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." This is the apostle's most unequivocal assertion. He spoke of the old world literally, of the heavens and earth which are now literally, of the water literally, and consequently of the fire literally. His argument may be put thus: "If the old world was overwhelmed

with water literally, so that the inhabitants were drowned, the works of men destroyed, and the world perished, then, no less literally, must we expect that, when the day of judgment comes, this present world, now standing out of the water and in the water, shall be destroyed, not again by water, but by the agency of fire." The objection is, that the old world did not perish by water—that is, the material structure, the globe, the earth, remained, and was repeopled after the flood. This is true; nevertheless, the flood was literal, and the surface of the earth was submerged, and underwent such a transformation that the language which describes it as perishing is not too strong. And so we expect the globe to survive the fiery ordeal awaiting it, to be reconstructed, and to begin a new career of order and beauty, that shall surpass all the experiences of its past history.

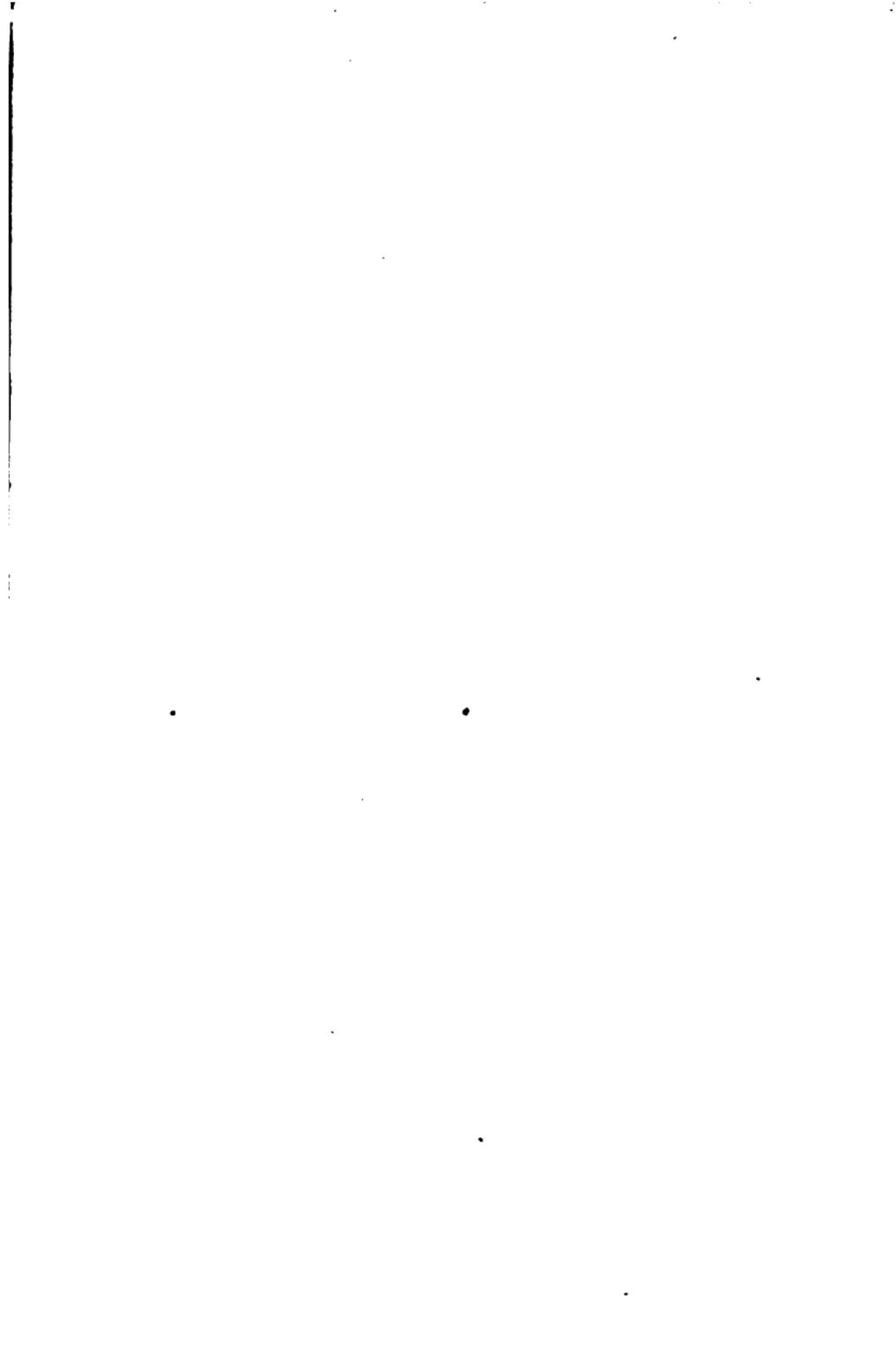
5. The prediction of the new creation, which is to follow the conflagration, corroborates the view we have taken of the literal destruction by fire. "Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteous-

ness." The state of things which followed the destruction of Jerusalem, if we have any knowledge of the facts, or any conception of the meaning of words, can not possibly be taken as the "new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The disorder and general profligacy that ensued were rather proofs of moral degeneracy. But our figurative interpreters will tell us that the old world which passed away was Judaism, and that the "new heavens and earth" were the Gospel economy. But the Gospel economy came in long before Jerusalem was destroyed. Its morning beams poured floods of light upon the waiting Church on the Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ, and its brightest rays cheered the apostles in their personal toils, while the temple and city were yet standing, and while the nation was yet at peace. Then, if the Gospel kingdom is the new heavens and earth, the new creation preceded the fiery visitation that took away the old. Sober-minded thinkers can not allow this preposterous assumption. The order of events is too plainly set forth in this chapter to admit of any such perversion of the truth,

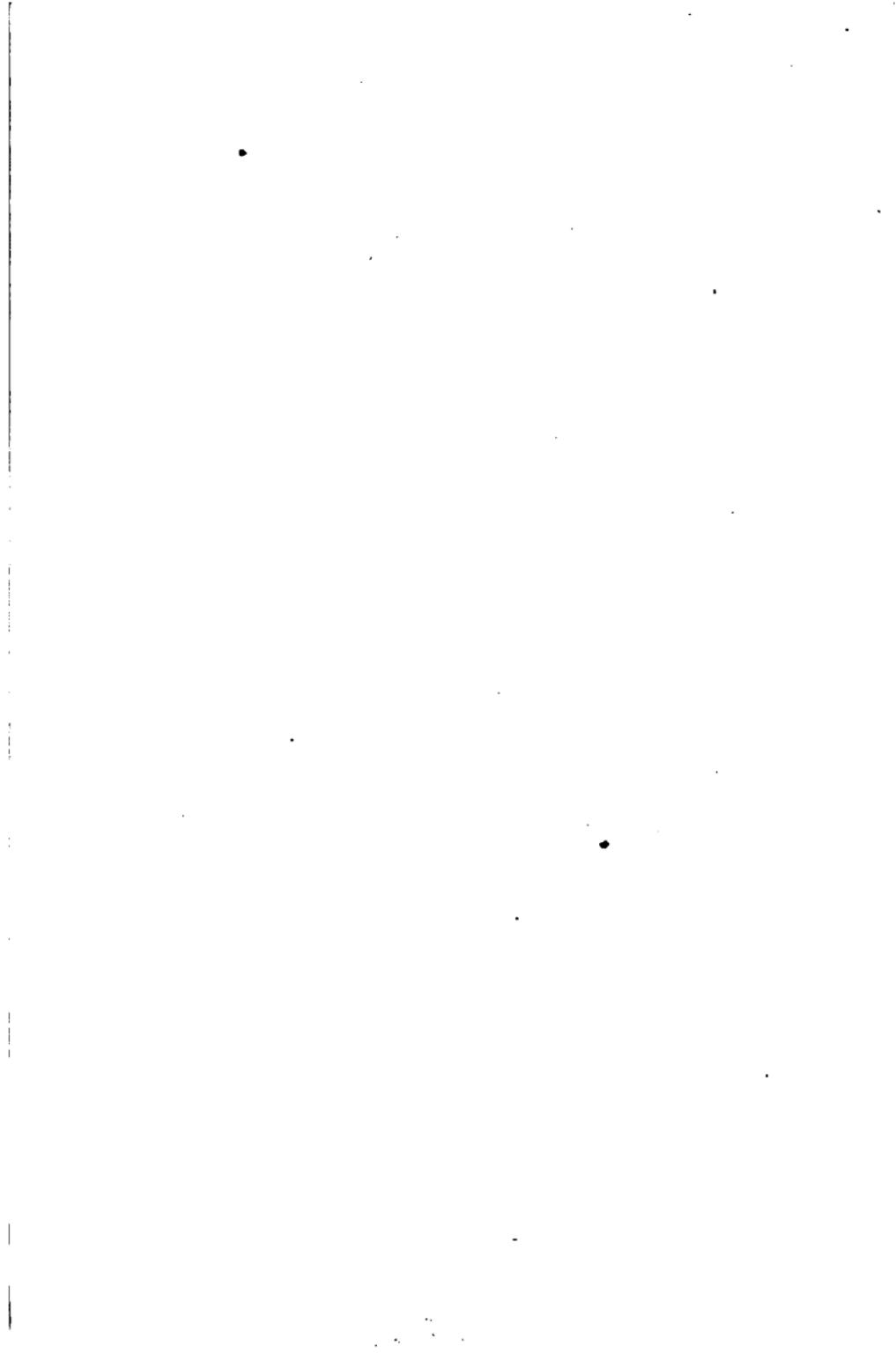
except it be by those who are "willingly ignorant;" and it was not without foresight of special occasion that this solemn discourse on the judgment was immediately followed by a warning against those who "wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction."

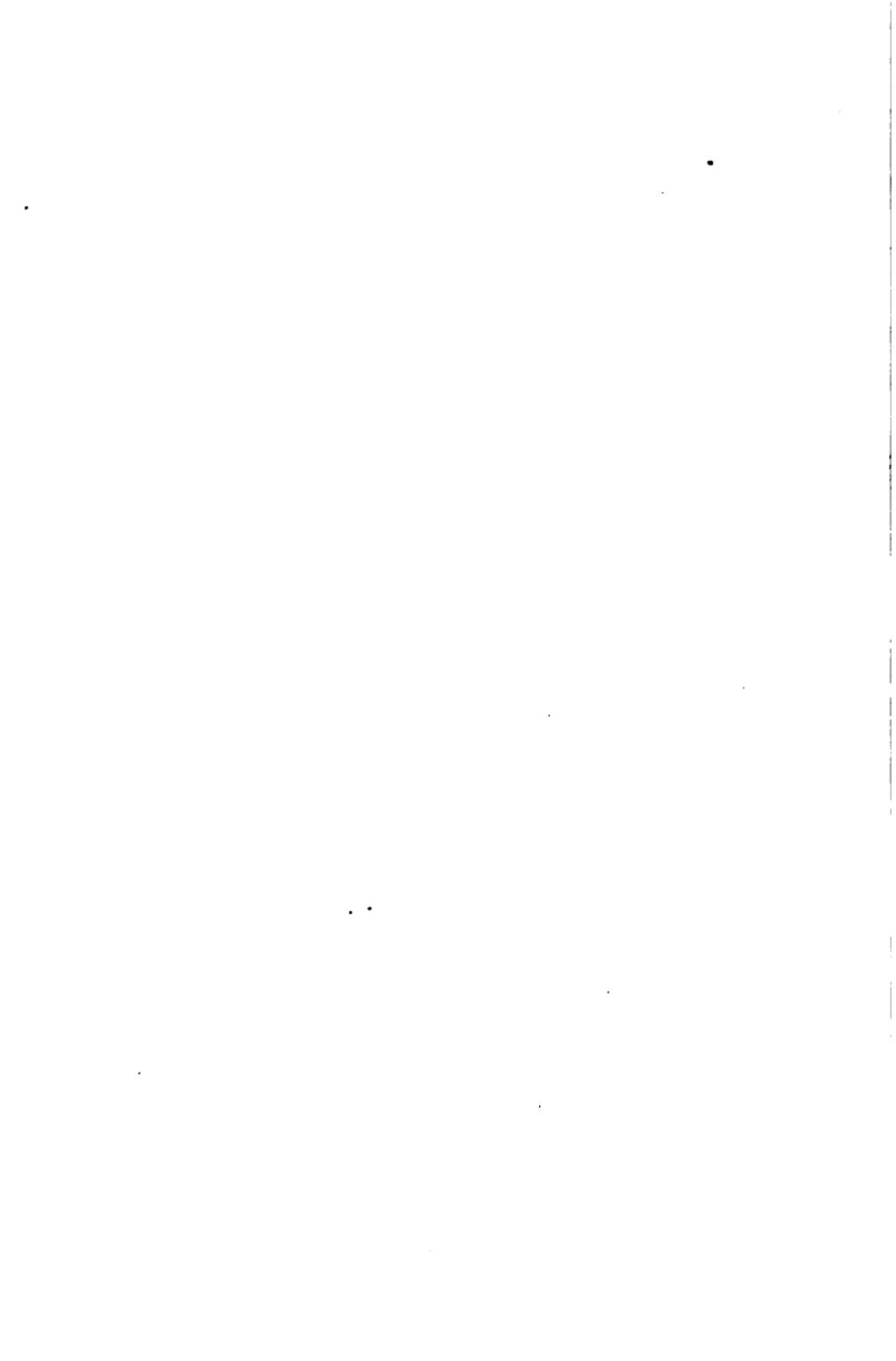
We now submit that it is as clear as any thing need be, that this grand description of the solemnities of "the day of the Lord" can not be taken "figuratively" to represent the violent overthrow of Judaism, and the subsequent establishment of Christianity, as a new creation, in its stead. The language does not require that interpretation, and will not bear such an application. The scope of the argument forbids any such meaning, and all the conditions of the case require that we accept the apostle's statement concerning the coming of the day of judgment, including the burning up of the earth and the works therein, in the literal sense, without any of the speculative refinements of modern "liberalism." Such was the faith of the early Church, and such has been the faith of the followers of Christ through all the centuries, while only "scoffers" ridicule it, sneeringly

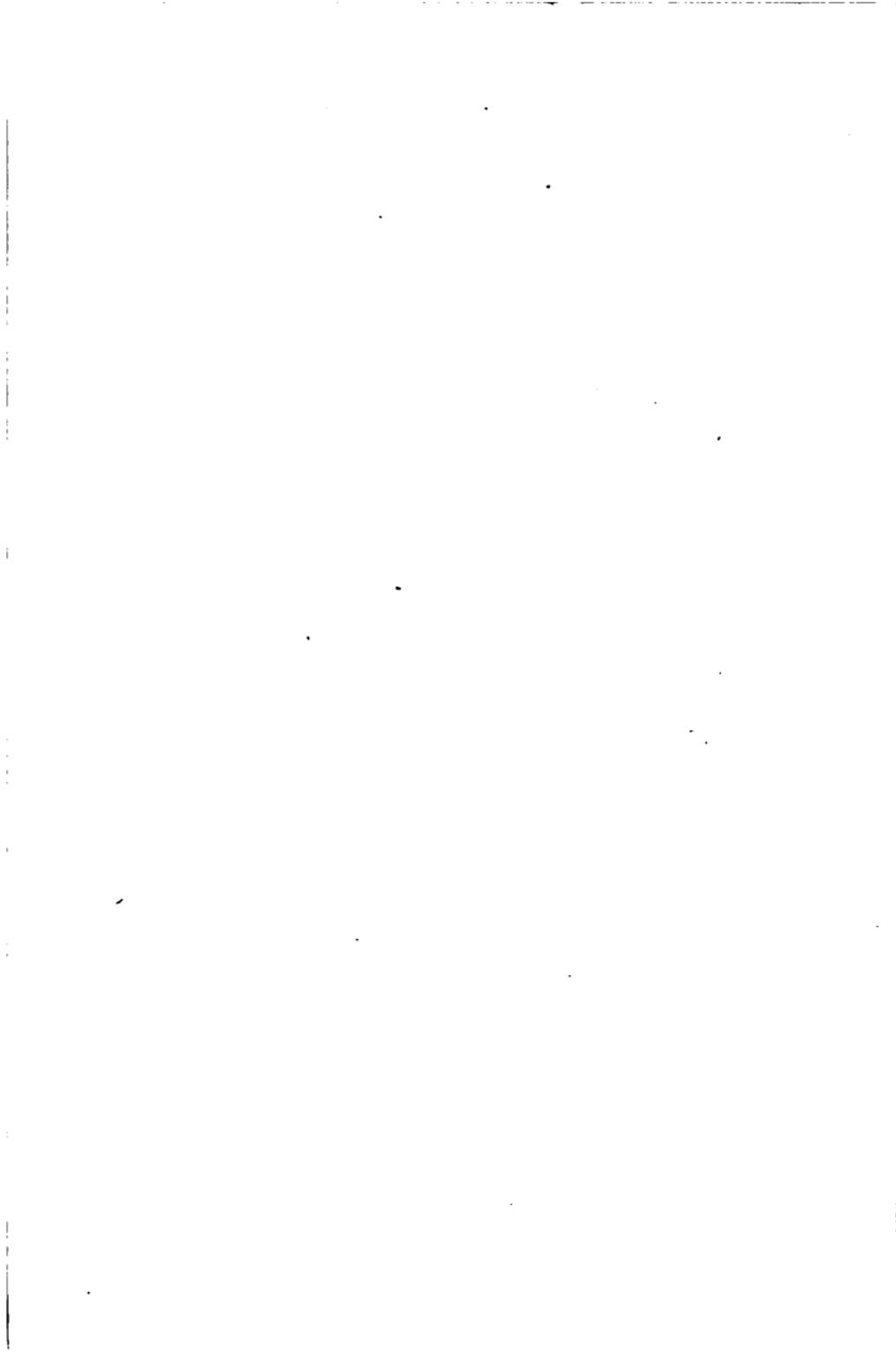
asking, "Where is the promise of his coming?" But, despite the scoffs of infidelity, and the sneers and sophistries of "liberalists," the doctrine of the future coming of Christ, and that of a future judgment, rest upon the sure foundation of the infallible Word, and one of the sublime incidents of that "great and terrible day" will be the conflagration of the sublunary world. Nature and revelation point to this coming fiery ordeal. The earth was "cursed for man's sake." It bears its thorns and briars, and sends forth its noxious exhalations, fairly groaning beneath the load of sin that presses upon its bosom. It travails in pain for deliverance! And deliverance will come in the throes of dissolving elements, when from the ashes of its purgation will spring its renewed form, free from the curse, and fitted for the habitation of righteousness. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." "And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."

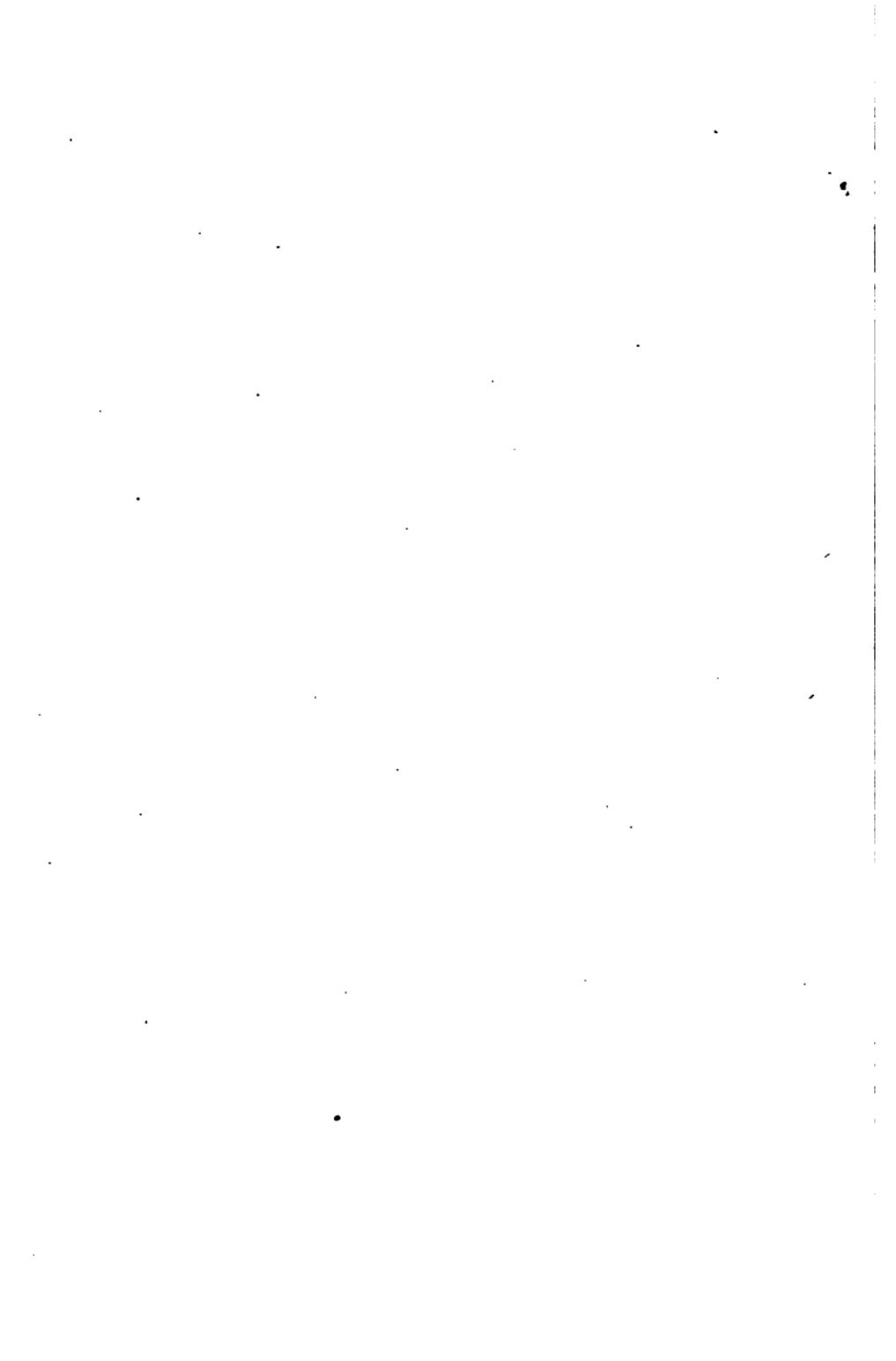














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